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**LIFE AND VOYAGES**

**OF**

**CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS.**

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A  
**HISTORY**  
OF THE  
**LIFE AND VOYAGES**  
OF  
**CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS.**

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BY WASHINGTON IRVING.

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Venient annis secula seris.  
Quibus Oceanus vincula rerum  
Laxet, et ingens pateat tellus,  
Tiphysque novus detegat orbes,  
Nec sit terris ultima Thule.—*Seneca. Medea.*

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IN THREE VOLUMES:

**VOL. II.**

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G. & C. CARVILL, 108 BROADWAY, NEW-YORK.

1828.

M.C.J.

M.M.C.

Checked

May 1913



*Southern District of New-York, ss.*

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the 24th day of January, A. D. 1828, in the 52d year of the Independence of the United States of America, WASHINGTON IRVING, of the said District, has deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof he claims as author, in the words following, to wit:

"A History of the Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus. By Washington Irving.

' Venient annis secula seria,  
Quibus Oceanus vincula rerum  
Laxet, et ingens pateat tellus,  
Tiphysque novus detegat orbes,  
Nec sit terris ultima Thule.—*Seneca. Medea.*' "

In conformity to the Act of Congress of the United States, entitled "An Act for the encouragement of Learning, by securing the copies of Maps, Charts, and Books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the time therein mentioned." And also to an Act, entitled "An Act supplementary to an Act, entitled an Act for the encouragement of Learning, by securing the copies of Maps, Charts, and Books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned, and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other Prints."

F. J. BETTS,

*Clerk of the Southern District of New-York.*

ELLIOTT AND PALMER, PRINTERS.

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**LIFE AND VOYAGES**  
**OF**  
**CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS.**

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**BOOK VII.**

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**CHAPTER I.**

**VOYAGE TO THE EAST END OF CUBA.**

**1494.** COLUMBUS set sail with his little squadron from the harbour of Isabella, on the 24th of April, and steered to the westward. The plan of his present expedition was to revisit the coast of Cuba, at the point where he had abandoned it in his first voyage, and thence to explore it on the southern side. As has already been observed, he supposed it to be a continent, and the extreme end of Asia, and if so, by following its shores in the proposed direction, he must eventually arrive at Cathay, and those other rich and commercial, though semi-barbarous, countries, described by Mandeville and Marco Polo\*.

After touching at Monte Christi, he anchored on the same day at the disastrous harbour of La Navidad. His object

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\* Cura de los Palacios, Cap. 123. MS.



in revisiting this melancholy scene was to obtain an interview with Guacanagari, who, he understood, had returned to his former residence. He could not be persuaded of the perfidy of that cacique, so deep was the impression made upon his heart by past kindness; he trusted, therefore, that a frank explanation would remove all painful doubts, and restore a friendly intercourse, which would be highly advantageous to the Spaniards, in their present time of scarcity and suffering. Guacanagari, however, still maintained his equivocal conduct, absconding at the sight of his ships; and though several of his subjects assured Columbus that the cacique would soon make him a visit, he did not think it adviseable to delay his voyage on such an uncertainty.

Pursuing his course, impeded occasionally by contrary winds, he arrived on the 29th at the port of St. Nicholas, from whence he beheld the extreme point of Cuba, to which in his preceding voyage he had given the name of Alpha and Omega, but which was called by the natives Bayatiquiri, and is now known as Point Maysi. Having crossed the channel, which is about eighteen leagues wide, Columbus sailed along the southern coast of Cuba for the distance of twenty leagues, when he anchored in a harbour to which, from its size, he gave the name of Puerto Grande, at present called Guantanamo. The entrance was narrow and winding, though deep; the harbour expanded within like a beautiful lake, in the bosom of a wild and mountainous country, covered with trees, some of them in blossom, others bearing fruit. Not far from the shore were two cottages built of reeds; and several fires blazing in various parts of the beach, gave signs of actual inhabitants. Columbus landed, therefore, attended by several men well armed, and

by the young Indian interpreter, Diego Colon, the native of the island of Guanahani, who had been baptized in Spain.

On arriving at the cottages, he found them deserted; the fires also were abandoned; not a human being was to be seen: the Indians had all fled to the woods and mountains. The sudden arrival of the ships had spread a panic throughout the neighbourhood, and apparently interrupted the preparations for a rude but plentiful banquet. There were great quantities of fish, utias and guanas; some suspended to the branches of the trees, others roasting on wooden spits before the fires. The Spaniards, accustomed of late to slender fare, fell to without ceremony on this bounteous feast, thus spread for them, as it were, in the wilderness. They abstained, however, from the guanas, which they still regarded with disgust, as a species of serpent, though they were considered so delicate a food by the savages, that, according to Peter Martyr, it was no more lawful for the common people to eat of them, than of peacocks and pheasants in Spain\*.

After their repast, as the Spaniards were roving about the vicinity, they beheld about seventy of the natives collected on the top of a lofty rock, and looking down upon them with great awe and amazement. On attempting to approach them, they instantly disappeared among the woods and clefts of the mountain. One, however, more bold or more curious than the rest, lingered on the brow of the precipice, gazing with timid wonder at the Spaniards, partly encouraged by their friendly signs, but ready in an instant to bound away after his companions.

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\* P. Martyr, Decad. 1, Lib. 3.

By order of Columbus the young Lucayan interpreter advanced and accosted him. The expressions of friendship, in his own language, soon dispelled the apprehensions of the wondering savage. He came to meet the interpreter, and being informed by him of the good intentions of the Spaniards, hastened to communicate the intelligence to his comrades. In a little while they were seen descending from their rocks, and issuing from their forests; approaching the strangers with great gentleness and veneration. Through means of the interpreter, Columbus learnt that they had been sent to the coast by their cacique, to procure fish for a solemn banquet which he was about to give to a neighbouring chieftain, and that they roasted the fish, to prevent it from spoiling in the transportation. They seemed to be of the same gentle and pacific character with the natives of Hayti. The ravages that had been made among their provisions by the hungry Spaniards, gave them no concern, for they observed that one night's fishing would replace all the loss. Columbus, however, in his usual spirit of justice, ordered that ample compensation should be made them; and, shaking hands, they parted mutually well pleased\*.

Leaving this harbour on the 1st of May, the admiral continued to the westward, sailing along a mountainous coast, enlivened by beautiful rivers, and indented by those commodious harbours for which this island is so remarkable. As he advanced, the country grew more fertile and populous. The natives crowded to the shores, man, woman, and child, gazing with astonishment at the ships, which glided gently along at no great distance. They held up fruits and provisions, inviting the Spaniards to land; others came off in canoes, bringing cassava bread, fish, and calabashes of

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\* Peter Martyr, ubi sup.

water, not for sale, but as offerings to the strangers, whom, as usual, they considered celestial beings descended from the skies. Columbus distributed the customary presents among them, which were received with transports of joy and gratitude. After continuing some distance along the coast, he came to another gulf or deep bay, narrow at the entrance, and expanding within, surrounded by a rich and beautiful country. There were lofty mountains sweeping up from the sea, but the shores were enlivened by numerous villages, and cultivated to such a degree as to resemble gardens and orchards. In this harbour, which it is probable was the same at present called St. Jago de Cuba, Columbus anchored and passed a night, overwhelmed, as usual, with the simple hospitality of the natives\*.

On inquiring of the people of this coast after gold, they uniformly pointed to the south, and as far as they could be understood, intimated that a great island lay in that direction, where it abounded. The admiral, in the course of his first voyage, had received information of such an island, which some of his followers had thought might be Babeque, the object of so much anxious search, and chimerical expectation. He had felt a strong inclination to diverge from his course, and go in quest of it, and this desire increased with every new report. On the following day, therefore, (the 3d of May,) after standing westward to a high cape, he suddenly turned his prow directly south; and abandoning for a time the coast of Cuba, steered off into the broad sea, in quest of this reported island.

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\* Cura de los Palacios, Cap. 124. MS.

## CHAPTER II.

## DISCOVERY OF JAMAICA.

1494. COLUMBUS had not sailed many leagues before the blue summits of Jamaica began to rise above the horizon. It was two days and nights, however, before he reached the island, filled with admiration, as he gradually drew near, at its vast size, the beauty of its mountains, the majesty of its forests, the fertility of its valleys, and the great number of villages with which the whole face of the country was animated.

On approaching the land, at least seventy canoes, filled with savages gaily painted and decorated with feathers, saluted forth more than a league from shore. They advanced in warlike array, uttering loud yells, and brandishing lances of pointed wood. The mediation of the interpreter, and a few presents to one of the canoes which ventured nearer than the rest, soothed this angry armada, and the squadron pursued its course unmolested. Columbus anchored in a harbour about the centre of the island, to which, from the great beauty of the surrounding country, he gave the name of Santa Gloria\*: it is the same at present called St. Ann's Bay.

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\* Cura de los Palacios, Cap. 125.

On the following morning, he weighed anchor at daybreak, and coasted westward, in search of a sheltered harbour, where his ship could be careened and caulked, as it leaked considerably. After proceeding a few leagues, he found one apparently suitable for the purpose. On sending a boat to sound the entrance, two large canoes, filled with Indians, issued forth to oppose their landing, hurling their lances, but from such a distance as to fall short of the Spaniards. Not wishing to proceed to any act of hostility that might prevent future intercourse, Columbus ordered the boat to return on board, and, finding there was sufficient depth of water for his ship, entered and anchored in the harbour. Immediately the whole beach was covered with Indians, painted with a variety of colours, but chiefly black; some partly clothed with palm leaves, and all wearing tufts and coronets of gay tropical feathers. Unlike the hospitable islanders of Cuba and Hayti, these appeared to partake of the warlike character of the Caribs, manifesting the fiercest hostility, hurling their javelins at the ships, and making the shores resound with their yells and war-whoops.

The admiral reflected that further forbearance might be mistaken for cowardice. It was necessary to careen his ship, and to send men on shore for a supply of water; but previously it was adviseable to strike an awe into the savages, that might prevent any molestation from them. As the caravels could not approach sufficiently near to the beach where the Indians were collected, he dispatched the boats well manned and armed. These rowing close to the shore let fly a volley of arrows from their crossbows, by which several Indians were wounded, and the rest thrown into confusion. The Spaniards then sprang on shore and put the whole multitude to flight; giving another discharge of their

crossbows, and letting loose upon them a dog, who pursued them with sanguinary fury\*. This is the first instance of the use of dogs against the natives, which were afterwards employed with such cruel effect by the Spaniards in their Indian wars.

Columbus now landed and took formal possession of the island, to which he gave the name of Santiago; but fortunately it has retained its original Indian name of Jamaica. The harbour, from its commodiousness, he called Puerto Bueno; it was in the form of a horse-shoe, and had a river in its vicinity†.

During the rest of the day, the neighbourhood remained silent and deserted. On the following morning, however, before sunrise, six Indians were seen on the shore, making signs of amity. They proved to be envoys sent by the caciques with proffers of peace and friendship. These were cordially reciprocated by the admiral; presents of trinkets were sent to the chieftains; and in a little while the harbour again swarmed with the naked and painted multitude; bringing abundance of provisions, similar in kind, but superior in quality, to those of the other islands.

During three days that the ships remained in this harbour, the most amicable intercourse was kept up with the natives. They appeared to be more ingenious, as well as more warlike, than their neighbours of Cuba and Hayti. Their canoes were better constructed, being ornamented with carving and painting at the bow and stern. Many were of great size, though formed from the trunks of single trees; often from a species of the mahogany. Columbus

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\* Cura de los Palacios, Cap. 125.

† Hist. del Almirante, ubi sup.

measured one, which was ninety-six feet long, and eight broad\*, hollowed out of one of those magnificent trees, which rise like verdant towers amidst the rich forests of the tropics. Every cacique prided himself on possessing a large canoe of the kind, which he seemed to regard as his ship of state. It is curious to remark the apparently innate difference between these island tribes. The natives of Porto Rico, though surrounded by adjacent islands, and subject to frequent incursions of the Caribs, were yet of a pacific character, and possessed very few canoes; while Jamaica, separated by distance from intercourse with other islands, protected in the same way from the dangers of invasion, and embosomed, as it were, in a peaceful mediterranean sea, was inhabited by a warlike race, and surpassed all the other islands in its maritime armaments.

His ship being repaired, and a supply of water taken in, Columbus made sail, and continued along the coast to the westward, so close to the shore, that the little squadron was continually surrounded by the canoes of the natives; who came off from every bay, and river, and head-land; no longer manifesting hostility, but anxious to exchange any thing they possessed for European trifles. After proceeding about twenty-four leagues, they approached the western extremity of the island, where, the coast bending to the south, the wind became unfavourable for their further progress along the shore. Being disappointed in his hopes of finding gold in Jamaica, and the breeze being fair for Cuba, Columbus determined to return thither, and not to leave it, until he had explored its coast to a sufficient distance to determine the question, whether it were terra firma or an

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\* Cura de los Palacios, Cap. 124.



island\*. To the last place at which he touched in Jamaica, he gave the name of the Gulf of Buen-tiempo, (or Fair Weather,) on account of the propitious wind which blew for Cuba. Just as he was about sailing, a young Indian came off to the ship, and begged that the Spaniards would take him with them to their country. He was followed by his relatives and friends, who endeavoured by the most affecting supplications to dissuade him from his purpose. For some time he was distracted between concern for the distress of his family, and an ardent desire to see the home of these wonderful strangers, which his imagination pictured as a region of celestial delights. Curiosity and the youthful propensity to rove prevailed; he tore himself from the embraces of his friends, and that he might not behold the tears of his sisters, hid himself in a secret part of the ship. Touched by this scene of natural affection, and pleased with the enterprising and confiding spirit of the youth, Columbus gave orders that he should be treated with especial kindness†.

It would have been interesting to have known something more of the fortunes of this curious savage, and of the impressions made upon so lively a mind by a first sight of the wonders of civilization; whether the land of the white men equalled his hopes; whether, as is usual with savages, he pined amidst the splendours of cities for his native forests, and whether he ever returned to the arms of his family. The early Spanish historians seem never to have interested themselves in the feelings or fortunes of these first visitors from the new world to the old. No further mention is made of this youthful adventurer.

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\* Hist. del Almirante, Cap. 54.

† Idem.

## CHAPTER III.

RETURN TO CUBA—NAVIGATION AMONG THE ISLANDS  
CALLED THE QUEEN'S GARDEN.

1494. SETTING sail from the gulf of Buen-tiempo, the squadron once more steered for the island of Cuba, and on the 18th of May arrived at a great cape, to which Columbus gave the name of Cabo de la Cruz, which it still retains. Here, landing at a large village, he was well received and entertained by the cacique and his subjects, who had long since heard of himself and his ships. In fact, Columbus found, from the report of this chieftain, that the numerous Indians who had visited his ships during his cruise along the northern coast, in his first voyage, had spread the story far and near, of these wonderful visiters, who had descended from the sky, and had filled the whole island with rumours and astonishment\*. The admiral endeavoured to ascertain from this cacique and his people, whether Cuba was an island or a continent. They all replied that it was an island, but of infinite extent; for they declared that no one had ever seen the end of it. This reply, while it manifested their ignorance of the nature of a continent, left the question still in doubt and obscurity. The Indian name of this province of Cuba was Macaca.

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\* Cura de los Palacios, C. 126.

Resuming his course to the west, on the following day Còlumbus came to where the coast suddenly swept away to the northeast for many leagues, and then curved round again to the west, forming an immense bay, or rather gulf. Here he was assailed by a violent storm, accompanied by awful thunder and lightning; which, in these latitudes, seem to rend the very heavens. Fortunately the storm was not of long duration, or his situation would have been perilous in the extreme; for he found the navigation rendered difficult by numerous keys\* and sand banks. These increased as he advanced, until the mariner stationed at the mast-head beheld the sea, as far as the eye could reach, completely studded with small islands. Some of them were low, naked, and sandy, others covered with verdure, and others tufted with lofty and beautiful forests. They were of various sizes, from one to four leagues, and were generally the more fertile and elevated the nearer they were to Cuba. Finding them to increase in number, so as to render it impossible to give names to each, the admiral gave this whole labyrinth of islands, which in a manner enamelled the face of the ocean with variegated verdure, the name of the Queen's Garden. He thought at first of leaving this archipelago on his right, and standing further out to sea; but he called to mind that Sir John Mandeville and Marco Polo had mentioned that the coast of Asia was fringed with islands, to the amount of several thousands. He persuaded himself that he was among that cluster; and resolved not to lose sight of the main land, by following which, if it were really Asia, he must soon arrive at the dominions of the Grand Khan.

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\* Keys, from cayos, rocks, which occasionally form small islands on the coasts of America.

Entering among these islands, therefore, Columbus soon became entangled in the most perplexed navigation, in which he was exposed to continual perils and difficulties, from sand banks, counter currents, and sunken rocks. The ships were obliged, in a manner, to grope their way, with men stationed at the mast-head, and the lead continually going. Sometimes they were obliged to shift their course, within the hour, to all points of the compass; sometimes they were straitened in a narrow channel, where it was necessary to lower all sail, and tow the vessels out, lest they should run aground; notwithstanding all which precautions, they frequently touched upon sand banks, and were extricated with great difficulty.

The variableness of the weather added to the embarrassments of the navigation; though after a little while it began to assume some method in its very caprices. In the morning the wind rose in the east, with the sun, and following his course through the day, died away at sunset in the west. Heavy clouds gathered with the approach of evening, sending forth sheets of lightning, and distant peals of thunder, and menacing a furious tempest; but as the moon rose, the whole mass broke away, part melting in a shower of rain, and part dispersed by a breeze which sprang up from the land.

There was much in the character of the surrounding scenery, to favour the idea of Columbus that he was in the Asiatic archipelago. As the ships glided along the smooth and glassy canals which separated these verdant islands, the magnificence of their vegetation, the soft odours which were wafted from flowers and blossoms and aromatic shrubs, and the splendid plumage of the scarlet cranes, or rather flamingoes, which abounded in the meadows, and of other tropical birds, which fluttered among the groves, resembled what is described of oriental climes.

These islands were generally uninhabited. They found a considerable village, however, on one of the largest, where they landed on the 22d of May. The houses were abandoned by their inhabitants, who appeared to depend principally on the sea for their subsistence. Large quantities of fish were found in their dwellings, and the adjacent shore was covered with the shells of tortoises. There were also domesticated parrots, and scarlet cranes, and numbers of dumb dogs, which it was afterwards found they fattened as an article of food. To this island the admiral gave the name of Santa Marta.

In the course of his voyage among these islands, Columbus beheld one day a number of the natives in a canoe, on the still surface of one of the channels, occupied in fishing, and was struck with the singular means they employed. They had a small fish, the flat head of which was furnished with numerous suckers, by which it attached itself so firmly to any object as to be torn in pieces rather than abandon its hold. Tying a line of great length to the tail of this fish, the Indians permitted it to swim at large; it generally kept near the surface of the water until it perceived its prey, when darting down swiftly it attached itself by the suckers to the throat of the fish, or to the under shell of a tortoise; nor did it relinquish its prey until both were drawn up by the fishermen, and taken out of the water. In this way the Spaniards witnessed the taking of a tortoise of immense size; and Fernando Columbus affirms that he himself saw a shark caught in this manner on the coast of Viragua. The fact has been corroborated by the accounts of various voyagers; and the same mode of fishing is said to be employed on the eastern coast of Africa, at Mosambique and at Madagascar. "Thus," it has been observed, "savage people, who proba-

bly have never held communication with each other, offer the most striking analogies in their modes of exercising their empire over animals\*."

These fishermen came on board of the ships in a frank and fearless manner. They furnished the Spaniards a supply of fish, and would cheerfully have given them every thing they possessed. To the admiral's inquiries concerning the geography of these parts, they said that the sea was full of islands to the south and to the west, but as to Cuba it continued running to the westward without any termination.

Having extricated himself from this archipelago, Columbus stood for a mountainous part of the island of Cuba, about fourteen leagues distant, where he landed at a large village on the 3d of June. Here he was received with that kindness and amity which distinguished the inhabitants of Cuba, whom he extolled above all the other islanders for their mild and pacific character. Their very animals, he said, were tamer, as well as larger, and better than those of the other islands. Among the various articles of food, which the natives brought with joyful alacrity from all parts to the Spaniards, were stock-doves of uncommon size and flavour. Perceiving something peculiar in their taste, Columbus ordered the crops of several newly killed to be opened, in which were found sweet spices; favourable indications of the productions of the country.

While the crews of the boats were procuring water and provisions, Columbus sought to gather information from the venerable cacique, and several of the old men of the village. They told him that the name of their province was Ornohay; that further on to the westward the sea was again covered with innumerable islands, and had but little depth.

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\* Humboldt, *Essai Politique sur l'île de Cuba*, T. 1, p. 364.

As to Cuba, none of them had ever heard that it had an end to the westward; forty moons would not suffice to reach to its extremity; in fact, they considered it interminable. They observed, however, that the admiral would receive more ample information from the inhabitants of Magon, an adjacent province which lay towards the west.

The quick apprehension of Columbus was struck with the sound of this name; it resembled that of Mangi, the richest province of the Grand Khan, bordering on the ocean. He made further inquiries concerning this region of Magon, and understood the Indians to say that it was inhabited by people who had tails like animals, and wore garments to conceal them. He recollected that Sir John Mandeville, in his account of the remote parts of the east, had recorded a story of the same kind, as current among certain naked tribes of Asia, and told by them in ridicule of the garments of their civilized neighbours, which they could only conceive useful in concealing some bodily defect\*. He became, therefore, more confident than ever, that by keeping along the coast to the westward, he should eventually arrive at the civilized realms of Asia. He flattered himself with the hopes of finding in this region of Magon the rich province of Mangi, and in its people with tails and garments, the long-robed inhabitants of the empire of Tartary.

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\* Cura de los Palacios, Cap. 127.

## CHAPTER IV.

## COASTING OF THE SOUTHERN SIDE OF CUBA.

1494. **ANIMATED** by one of the pleasing illusions of his ardent imagination, Columbus pursued his voyage, with a prosperous breeze, along the supposed continent of Asia. He was now opposite to that part of the southern side of Cuba, where, for nearly thirty-five leagues, the navigation is unembarrassed by banks and islands. To his left, was the broad and open sea, whose dark blue colour gave token of ample depth; to his right extended the richly wooded province of Ornofay, gradually sweeping up into a range of interior mountains; the verdant coast watered by innumerable streams, and studded with Indian villages. The appearance of the ships spread wonder and joy along the seaboard. The natives hailed with acclamations the arrival on their shores of these wonderful beings, whose fame had circulated more or less throughout the island, and who brought with them the blessings of the skies. They came off swimming, or in their canoes, to offer the fruits and productions of the land, and regarded the white men almost with adoration. After the usual evening shower, when the breeze blew from the shore, and brought off the sweetness of the land, it bore with it also the distant songs of the natives, and the sound of their rude music, as they were probably celebrating, with their national chants and dances, the arri-



val of the white men. So delightful were these spicy odours and cheerful sounds to Columbus, who was at present open to all pleasurable influences, that he declared the night passed away as a single hour\*.

It is impossible to resist noticing the striking contrasts which are sometimes forced upon the mind. The coast here described, so populous and animated, rejoicing in the visit of the discoverers, is the same that extends westward of the city of Trinidad, along the gulf of Xagua. All is now silent and deserted. Civilization, which has covered some parts of Cuba with glittering cities, has rendered this a solitude. The whole race of Indians has long since passed away; pining and perishing beneath the domination of the strangers whom they welcomed so joyfully to their shores. Before me lies the account of a night recently passed on this very coast, by a celebrated traveller; but with what different feelings from those of Columbus! "I passed," says he, "a great part of the night upon the deck. What deserted coasts! not a light to announce the cabin of a fisherman. From Batabano to Trinidad, a distance of fifty leagues, there does not exist a village. Yet in the time of Columbus this land was inhabited even along the margin of the sea. When pits are digged in the soil, or the torrents plough open the surface of the earth, there are often found hatchets of stone and vessels of copper; reliques of the ancient inhabitants of the island†!"

For the greater part of two days the ships swept along this open part of the coast, traversing the wide gulf of Xagua. At length they came to where the sea became suddenly as white as milk, and perfectly turbid, as though flour

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\* Cura de los Palacios.

† Humboldt, *Essai Pol. sur Cuba*, T. 2, p. 25.

had been mingled with it. This is caused by fine sand, or calcareous particles, raised from the bottom at certain depths, by the agitation of the waves and currents. It spread great alarm through the ships, which was heightened by their soon finding themselves surrounded by banks and keys, and in shallow water. The further they proceeded, the more perilous became their situation. They were in a narrow channel where they had not room to turn and to beat out; where there was no hold for their anchors, and where they were violently tossed about by the winds, and in danger of being stranded. At length they came to a small island, where they found tolerable anchorage. Here they remained for the night in great anxiety; many were for abandoning all further prosecution of the enterprize, thinking that they might esteem themselves fortunate should they be able to return from whence they came. Columbus, however, could not consent to relinquish his voyage, now that he thought himself in the route for a brilliant discovery. The next morning, he dispatched the smallest caravel to explore this new labyrinth of islands, and to penetrate to the main land in quest of fresh water, of which the ships were in great need. The caravel returned with a report that the canals and keys of this group were as numerous and intricate as those of the garden of the queen. That the main land was bordered by deep marshes and a muddy coast, where the mangrove trees grew within the water, and so close together that they formed, as it were, an impenetrable wall. That within, the land appeared fertile and mountainous, and columns of smoke rising from various parts gave signs of numerous inhabitants\*.

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\* Cura de los Palacios, Cap. 128.

Under the guidance of this caravel, Columbus now ventured to penetrate this little archipelago ; working his way with great caution, toil, and peril, among the narrow channels which separated the sand banks and islands, and frequently getting aground. At length he reached a low point of Cuba, to which he gave the name of Point Serafin, within which the coast swept off to the east, forming so deep a bay, that he could not see the land at the bottom of it. To the north, however, there were mountains afar off, and the intermediate space was clear and open, the islands in sight lying to the south and west ; a description which agrees with that of the great bay of Batabano. Columbus now steered for these mountains, with a fair wind, and three fathoms of water, and on the following day anchored on the coast near a beautiful grove of palm-trees.

Here a party was sent on shore for wood and water, and found two living springs in the midst of the grove. While they were employed cutting wood, and filling their water casks, an archer strayed into the forest with his crossbow in search of game, but soon returned flying with great terror, and calling loudly for aid upon his comrades. He declared that he had not proceeded far, when he suddenly espied through an opening glade a man in a long white dress, so like a friar of the order of St. Mary of Mercy, that at first sight he took him for the chaplain of the admiral. Two others followed, in white tunics reaching to their knees, and the three were of as fair complexions as Europeans. Behind these appeared many more, to the number of thirty, armed with clubs and lances. They made no signs of hostility, but remained quiet, the man in the long white dress alone advancing to accost him ; but he was so alarmed at their number, that he had fled again, to seek the aid of his companions. The party all hurried to the ships.

When Columbus heard this story he was greatly rejoiced, for he concluded that these must be the clothed inhabitants of Magon, of whom he had recently heard, and that he had at length come upon the traces of a civilized people, if not within the very borders of the rich province of Mangi.

On the following day he dispatched a party of armed men in quest of these people clad in white, with orders to penetrate, if necessary, forty miles into the interior, until they met with some of the inhabitants; for he thought the populous and cultivated parts might lie distant from the sea, and that there might be towns and cities beyond the wild woods and mountains of the coast. The party penetrated through a belt of thick forest which girdled the shore, and then entered upon a great plain or savannah, covered with rank grass and herbage as tall as ripe corn, and destitute of any road or footpath. Here they were so entangled and fettered, as it were, by matted grass and creeping vegetation, that it was with the utmost difficulty they penetrated a mile, when they had to abandon the attempt, and return weary and exhausted to the ships.

Another party was sent on the succeeding day, to penetrate in a different direction. They had not proceeded far from the coast, when they beheld the footprints of some large animal with claws, which some supposed the tracks of a lion, others of a griffin, but which were probably made by the alligators which abound in that vicinity. Dismayed at the sight, they hastened back towards the sea-side. In their way they passed through a forest, with lawns and meadows opening in various parts of it, in which were flocks of cranes, twice the size of those of Europe. Many of the trees and shrubs sent forth those aromatic odours which were continually deceiving them with the hope of finding oriental spices. They saw also abundance of grape vines, that beauti-

ful feature in the vegetation of the new world. Many of these crept to the summits of the highest trees, overwhelming them with foliage, twisting themselves from branch to branch, and bearing ponderous clusters of juicy grapes. The party returned to the ships equally unsuccessful with their predecessors, and pronouncing the country wild and impenetrable, though exceedingly fertile. As a proof of its abundance, they brought great clusters of the wild grapes, which Columbus afterwards transmitted to the sovereigns, together with a specimen of the water of the white sea through which he had passed.

As no tribe of Indians was ever discovered in Cuba wearing clothing, it is probable that the story of the men in white originated in some error of the archer; who, full of the idea of the mysterious inhabitants of Magon, may have been startled, in the course of his lonely wandering in the forest, by one of those flocks of cranes which it seems abounded in the neighbourhood. These birds, like the flamingoes, feed in company, with one stationed at a distance as sentinel. When seen through the openings of the woodlands, standing in rows along a smooth savannah or in a glassy pool of water, their height and erectness give them, at the first glance, the semblance of human figures. Whether the story originated in error or in falsehood, it made a deep impression on Columbus; who was predisposed to be deceived, and to believe every thing that favoured the illusion of his being on the confines of a civilized country.

After he had explored the deep bay to the east, and ascertained that it was not an arm of the sea, he continued westward; and proceeding about nine leagues, came to an inhabited shore, where he had communications with several of the natives. They were naked, as usual; but that he attributed to their being mere fishermen, inhabiting a savage

coast; he presumed the civilized regions to lie in the interior. He thought he received information from them corroborating this idea; but as his Lucayan interpreter did not understand the language, or rather dialect, of this part of Cuba, all his communications with the natives had to be through the erroneous medium of signs and gesticulations. He understood from them, that among certain mountains which he saw far off to the west, there was a powerful king, who reigned in great state over many populous provinces; that he wore a white garment which swept the ground; that he was called a saint\*; and that he never spoke, but communicated his orders to his subjects by signs, which were implicitly obeyed.

In all this we see the busy imagination of the admiral interpreting every thing into unison with his preconceived ideas. Las Casas assures us that there was no cacique ever known in the island who wore garments, or answered in other respects to this description. This king with a saintly title, was probably nothing more than a reflected image haunting the mind of Columbus, of that mysterious potentate, Prester John, who had long figured in the narrations of all eastern travellers, sometimes as a monarch, sometimes as a priest: the situation of whose empire and court was always a matter of doubt and contradiction, and had recently become again an object of curious inquiry.

The information derived from these people concerning the coast to the westward, was entirely vague. They said that it continued for at least twenty days' journey, but whether it terminated there, they did not know. They appeared but

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\* Que le llamaban Santo é que traia tunica blanca que le arrastra por el suelo. *Cura de los Palacios, Cap.* 128.

† Herrera, *Hist. Ind. Decad.* 1, L. 2, C. 14.

little informed of any thing out of their immediate neighbourhood. Taking an Indian from this place as a guide, Columbus steered for the distant mountains said to be inhabited by this cacique in white raiment, hoping they might prove the confines of a more civilized country. He had not gone far before he was involved in the usual perplexities of keys, shelves, and sand banks. The vessels frequently stirred up the sand and slime from the bottom of the sea; at other times they were almost imbedded in narrow channels, where there was no room to turn, and it was necessary to drag them forward by means of the capstern, to their great injury. At one time they came to where the sea was almost covered with tortoises; at another time flights of cormorants and wood-pigeons darkened the sun; and one day the whole air was filled with gaudy clouds of butterflies, until dispelled by the evening shower.

When they approached the mountainous region, they found the coast bordered by drowned lands, or morasses, and, beset by such thick forests, that it was impossible to penetrate to the interior. They were several days seeking fresh water, of which they were in great want. At length they found a spring in a grove of palm-trees, and near it shells of the pearl oyster, from which Columbus thought there might be a valuable fishery for pearls in the neighbourhood.

While thus cut off from all intercourse with the interior by a belt of swamp and forest, the country appeared to be well peopled. Columns of smoke ascended from various parts, which grew more frequent as they advanced, until they rose from every rock and woody height. The Spaniards were at a loss to determine whether these arose from villages and towns, or whether from signal fires, to give notice of the approach of the ships, and to alarm the country; such as

were usual on European seaboard, when an enemy was descried hovering in the vicinity.

For several days Columbus continued exploring this perplexed and lonely coast, whose intricate channels are seldom visited, even at the present day, excepting by the solitary and lurking bark of the smuggler. As he proceeded, however, he found that the coast took a general bend to the southwest. This accorded precisely with the descriptions given by Marco Polo of the remote coast of Asia. He now became fully assured that he was on that part of the Asiatic continent which lies beyond the boundaries of the old world, as laid down by Ptolemy. He had but to continue on, to arrive before long, to where this range of coast towards the southwest terminated in the Aurea Chersonesus of the ancients\*.

The ardent imagination of Columbus was always sallying in the advance, and suggesting some splendid track of enterprise. Combining his present conjectures as to his situation, with the imperfect lights of geography, he conceived a triumphant route for his return to Spain. Doubling the Aurea Chersonesus, he should emerge into the seas frequented by the ancients, and bordered by the luxurious nations of the east. Stretching across the gulf of the Ganges, he might pass by Trapoban, and continuing on to the straits of Babel-mandel, arrive on the shores of the Red sea. From thence, he might make his way by land to Jerusalem, take shipping at Joppa, and traverse the Mediterranean to Spain. Or should the route from Ethiopia to Jerusalem be deemed too perilous from savage and warlike tribes, or should he not choose to separate from his vessels, he might sail round the whole coast of Africa, pass triumphantly by the Portuguese,

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\* The present peninsula of Malacca.



in their midway groping along the shores of Guinea, and after having thus circumnavigated the globe, furl his adventurous sails at the pillars of Hercules, the ne plus ultra of the ancient world! Such was the soaring meditation of Columbus, as recorded by one of his intimate associates\*; nor is there any thing surprising in his ignorance of the real magnitude of our globe. The mechanical admeasurement of a known part of its circle, has rendered its circumference a familiar fact in our day; but in his time it still remained a problem with the profoundest philosophers.

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\* Cura de los Palacios, Cap. 123. MS.

## CHAPTER V.

RETURN OF COLUMBUS ALONG THE SOUTHERN COAST OF  
CUBA.

1494. THE opinion of Columbus that he was coasting the continent of Asia, and approaching the confines of eastern civilization, was shared by all his fellow voyagers, among whom were several able and experienced navigators. They were far, however, from sharing his enthusiasm. They were to derive no glory from the success of the enterprise, and they shrunk from its increasing difficulties and perils. The ships were strained and crazed, by the various injuries they had received in running frequently aground. Their cables and rigging were worn; their provisions were growing scanty; a great part of the biscuit was spoiled by the sea-water, which oozed in through innumerable leaks. The crews were worn out by incessant labour, and disheartened at the appearance of the sea before them, which continued to exhibit a mere wilderness of islands. They remonstrated therefore against persisting any longer in this voyage. They had already followed the coast far enough to satisfy their minds that it was a continent; and though they doubted not that civilized regions lay in the route they were pursuing, yet their provisions might be exhausted, and their vessels disabled before they could arrive at those countries.

Columbus, as his imagination cooled, was himself aware of the inadequacy of his vessels to the voyage he had contemplated; but he felt it of importance to his fame, and to the popularity of his enterprizes, to furnish satisfactory proofs that the land he had discovered was a continent. He therefore persisted four days longer in exploring the coast, as it bent to the southwest, until every one declared that there could no longer be a doubt on the subject; for that it was impossible so vast a continuity of land could belong to a mere island. The admiral was determined, however, that the fact should not rest merely on his own assertion, having had recent proofs of a disposition to gainsay his statements, and depreciate his discoveries. He sent round, therefore, a public notary, Fernan Perez de Luna, to each of the vessels, accompanied by four witnesses, who demanded formally of every person on board, from the captain to the ship-boy, whether he had any doubt that the land before him was a continent; the beginning and end of the Indies, by which any one might return overland to Spain; and by pursuing the coast of which they would soon arrive among civilized people. If any one entertained a doubt, he was called upon to express it, that it might be removed. On board of the vessels were several experienced navigators, and men well versed in the geographical knowledge of the times. They examined their maps and charts, and the reckonings and journals of the voyage, and after deliberating maturely, declared under oath that they had no doubt upon the subject. They grounded their belief principally upon their having coasted for three hundred and thirty-five leagues\*, an extent

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\* This calculation evidently includes all the courses of the ships in their various tacks along the coast. Columbus could

unheard of as appertaining to an island; while the land continued to stretch forward interminably, bending towards the south, conformably to the descriptions of the remote coast of India.

Lest they should subsequently, out of malice or caprice, contradict the opinion thus solemnly avowed, it was proclaimed by the notary, that whoever should offend in such manner, if an officer, should pay a penalty of ten thousand maravedis; if a ship-boy, or a person of like rank, he should receive a hundred lashes, and have his tongue cut out. A formal statement was afterwards drawn up by the notary, including the depositions and names of every individual, which document still exists\*. This singular process took place near that deep bay, called by some the Bay of Philipina, by others of Cortes. At this very time, as has been remarked, a ship-boy, from the mast-head, might have overlooked the group of islands to the south, and have beheld the open sea beyond†. Two or three days further sail would have carried Columbus round the extremity of Cuba, would have dispelled his illusion, and might have given an entirely different course to his subsequent discoveries. In his present conviction he lived and died; believing to his last hour, that Cuba was the extremity of the Asiatic continent.

Relinquishing all further investigation of the coast, he stood to the southeast on the 13th of June, and soon came in sight of a large island, with mountains rising majestically among this labyrinth of little keys. To this he gave the

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hardly have made such an error as to have given this extent to the southern side of the island, even including the inflexions of the coast.

\* Navarrete, Collec. T. 2.

† Muñoz, Hist. N. Mundo, L. 5, p. 217.

name of Evangelista: it is at present known as the Island of Pines, and is celebrated for its excellent mahogany. Here he anchored and took in a supply of wood and water. He then stood to the south along the shores of the island, hoping, by turning its southern extremity, to find an open route eastward for Hispaniola, and intending, on his way, to run along the southern side of Jamaica. He had not proceeded far before he came to what he supposed to be a channel opening to the southeast, between Evangelista and some opposite island. After entering for some distance, however, he found himself enclosed in a deep bay, being the lagoon of Siguanca, which penetrates far into the island.

Observing dismay painted on the faces of all his crew, at finding themselves thus land-locked, and almost destitute of provisions, Columbus cheered them with encouraging words, and resolved to extricate himself from this perplexed maze, by turning on his steps, and retracing his course along Cuba. Leaving the lagoon, therefore, he returned to his last anchoring place; and from thence set sail on the 25th of June, navigating back through the groups of islands between Evangelista and Cuba, and across a tract of the white sea, which had so much appalled his people. Here he experienced a repetition of the anxieties, the perils, and the toils, which had beset him in his advance along the coast. The crews were alarmed by the frequent changes in the colour of the water, sometimes green, sometimes almost black, at other times as white as milk; at one time they fancied themselves surrounded by rocks; at another the sea appeared to be a vast sand-bank. On the 30th of June the admiral's ship ran aground with such violence as to sustain great injury. Every effort to extricate her by sending out anchors astern was ineffectual, and it was necessary to drag her over the shoal by the prow. At length they emerged from the

clusters of islands called the Jardins and Jardinillos, and came to the open part of the coast of Cuba. Here they once more sailed along the beautiful and fertile province of Ornofay, and were again delighted with the fragrant and honied airs which were wafted from the land\*. Among the mingled odours the admiral fancied he perceived that of storax proceeding from the smoke of fires blazing on the shores.

Here Columbus sought some convenient harbour where he might procure wood and water, and allow his crews time for repose and refreshment. They were exceedingly enfeebled and emaciated by the toils and privations of the voyage. For nearly two months they had been struggling with perpetual difficulties and dangers, and suffering from a scarcity of provisions. Among these uninhabited keys, and drowned shores, their supplies from the natives had been precarious, and at wide intervals; nor would the fresh provisions thus furnished last above a day, from the heat and humidity of the climate. It was the same case with any fish they might chance to catch, so that they had to depend almost entirely upon their daily allowance of ship's provisions, which was reduced to a pound of mouldy bread, and a small portion of wine†. With joy, therefore, they anchored on the 7th of July in the mouth of a fine river in this genial and abundant region. The cacique of the neighbourhood, who reigned over an extensive territory, received the admiral with demonstrations of mingled joy and reverence, and his subjects came laden with whatever their country afforded; utias, birds of various kinds, particularly large

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\* Humboldt, (in his *Essai Polit.* T. 2, p. 24,) speaks of the delicious fragrance of flowers and honey which comes breathing upon the voyager from this same coast.

† Herrera, *Hist. Ind. Decad.* 1, L. 2, Cap. 14.

pigeons, cassava bread, and fruits of a rich and aromatic flavour.

It was a custom with Columbus, in all remarkable places which he visited, to erect crosses in conspicuous situations, to denote the discovery of the country and its subjugation to the true faith. He ordered a large cross of wood, therefore, to be elevated on the bank of this river. This was done on a Sunday morning, with great ceremony, and the celebration of a solemn mass. When Columbus disembarked for the purpose, he was met upon the shore by the cacique and his principal favourite, a venerable Indian fourscore years of age, of grave and dignified deportment. The old man brought a string of a certain kind of beads, to which the Indians attached a mystic value, and a calabash of a delicate kind of fruit; these he presented to the admiral in token of amity. They then each took him by the hand, and proceeded with him to the grove, where preparations had been made for the celebration of the mass. A multitude of the natives followed. While mass was performing in this natural temple, the Indians looked on with awe and reverence, perceiving from the tones and gesticulations of the priest, the lighted tapers, the smoking incense, and the devotion of the Spaniards, that it must be a ceremony of a sacred and mysterious nature. When the service was ended, the old man of fourscore, who had contemplated it with profound attention, approached Columbus, and made him an oration in the Indian manner.

"This which thou hast been doing," said he, "is well; for it appears to be thy manner of giving thanks to God. I am told that thou hast lately come to these lands with a mighty force, and hast subdued many countries, spreading great fear among the people; but be not, therefore, vain-glorious. Know that, according to our belief, the souls of

men have two journeys to perform after they have departed from the body; one to a place dismal and foul, and covered with darkness, prepared for those who have been unjust and cruel to their fellow men; the other pleasant and full of delight, for such who have promoted peace on earth. If then thou art mortal, and dost expect to die, and dost believe that each one shall be rewarded according to his deeds, beware that thou wrongfully hurt no man, nor do harm to those who have done no harm to thee\*."

This speech was explained to the admiral by his Lucayan interpreter, Diego Colón. Being a man of sincere piety and tender feelings, he was greatly moved by the simple eloquence of this untutored savage. He told him, in reply, that he rejoiced to hear his doctrine respecting the future state of the soul, having supposed that no belief of the kind existed among the inhabitants of these countries. That he had been sent among them by his sovereigns to teach them the true religion; to protect them from all harm and injury; and especially to subdue and punish their enemies and persecutors, the cannibals. That, therefore, all innocent and peaceable men might look up to him with confidence as an assured friend and protector.

The old man was overjoyed at these words, but was equally astonished to learn that the admiral, whom he considered so grand and powerful, was yet but a subject. His wonder increased when the interpreter told him of the riches and splendour, and power of the Spanish monarchs, and of the wonderful things that he had beheld on his visit to Spain. Finding himself listened to with eager curiosity by the whole multitude, the interpreter went on to describe the ob-

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\* Herrera, Dec. 1, L. 11, C. 14. Hist. del Almirante, Cap. 57. P. Martyr, Decad. 1, L. 3. Cura de los Palacios, Cap. 130.



jects which had most struck his mind in the country of the white men. The splendid cities ; the vast churches ; the troops of horsemen ; the great animals of various kinds ; the pompous festivals and tournaments of the court ; the glittering armies ; and above all the bull-fights. The Indians all listened in mute amazement, but the old man was particularly excited. He was of a curious and wandering disposition, and had been a great voyager ; having, according to his account, visited Jamaica and Hispaniola, and the remote parts of Cuba\*. A sudden desire now seized him to behold the glorious country thus described ; and, old as he was, he offered to embark with the admiral. His wife and children, however, beset him with such lamentations and remonstrances, that he was obliged to abandon the intention ; though he did it with great reluctance, asking repeatedly if the land they spoke of were not heaven ; for it seemed to him impossible that earth could produce such wonderful beings†.

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\* Hist. del Almirante, Cap. 57.

† Peter Martyr, Decad. 1, L. 3.

## CHAPTER VI.

## COASTING VOYAGE ALONG THE SOUTH SIDE OF JAMAICA.

1494. COLUMBUS remained for several days at anchor in the river, to which, from the solemn mass performed on its banks, he gave the name of Rio de la Misa. At length, on the 16th of July, he took leave of the friendly cacique and his ancient counsellor, who beheld his departure with sorrowful countenances. He took one young Indian with him from this place, whom he afterwards sent to the Spanish sovereigns. Leaving to the left the great cluster of islands which he had named the Queen's Garden, he steered south for the broad open sea and deep blue water, until, having a free navigation, he could stand eastward for Hispaniola. He had scarcely got clear of the islands, however, when he was assailed by furious gusts of wind and rain, which for two days pelted his crazy vessels, and harassed his enfeebled crews. At length, as he approached Cape Cruz, a violent squall struck the ships, and nearly threw them on their beam ends. Fortunately they were able to take in sail immediately, and letting go their largest anchors, they rode out the transient gale. The admiral's ship was so strained by the injuries received among the islands, that she leaked at every seam, and the utmost exertions of the weary crew could not prevent the water from gaining on her. At length they were enabled to reach Cape Cruz, where they anchored on the

18th of July, and remained three days; receiving the same hospitable succour from the natives which they had experienced on their former visit.

The wind continuing contrary for the return to Hispaniola, Columbus, on the 22d of July, stood across for Jamaica, to complete the circumnavigation of that island. For nearly a month he continued beating to the eastward along its southern coast; experiencing just such variable winds and evening showers as had prevailed along the shores of Cuba. Every evening he was obliged to anchor under the land, often at nearly the same place from whence he had sailed in the morning. The natives no longer manifested hostility, but followed the ships in their canoes, bringing supplies of provisions. Columbus was so much delighted with the verdure, freshness, and fertility of this noble island, that had the state of his vessels and crews permitted, he would gladly have remained to explore the interior. He spoke with admiration of its frequent and excellent harbours, but was particularly pleased with a great bay containing seven islands, and surrounded by numerous villages\*. Anchoring here one evening, he was visited by a cacique who resided in a large village, situated on an eminence of the loftiest and most fertile of the islands. He came attended by a numerous train, bearing various refreshments. This chieftain manifested great curiosity in his inquiries concerning the Spaniards, their ships, and the region from whence they came. The admiral made his customary reply, setting forth the great power, but the benign intentions, of the Spanish sovereigns. The Lucayan interpreter again enlarged upon the wonders he had beheld in Spain; the prowess of the

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\* From the description this must be the great bay east of Portland Point; at the bottom of which is Old Harbour.

Spaniards; the countries they had visited and subjugated; and above all, their having made descents on the islands of the Caribs, routed their formidable inhabitants, and carried several of them into captivity. To these accounts the cacique and his followers remained listening in profound attention, until the night was advanced.

The next morning the ships were under way, and standing along the coast with a light wind and easy sail, when they beheld three canoes issuing from among the islands of the bay. They approached in regular order; one, which was very large and handsomely carved and painted, was in the centre, a little in advance of the two others, which appeared to attend and guard it. In this was seated the cacique and his family, consisting of his wife, two daughters, two sons, and five brothers. One of the daughters was eighteen years of age, beautiful in form and countenance; her sister was somewhat younger; both were naked, according to the custom of these islands, but were of modest demeanour. In the prow of the canoe stood the standard bearer of the cacique, clad in a kind of mantle of variegated feathers, with a tuft of gay plumes on his head, and bearing in his hand a fluttering white banner. Two Indians, with caps or helmets of feathers, of a similar form and colour, and their faces painted in a similar manner, beat upon tabors; two others, with hats curiously wrought of green feathers, held trumpets of a fine black wood, ingeniously carved; and there were six others, in large hats of white feathers, who appeared to be guards to the cacique.

This gallant little armada having arrived along side of the admiral's ship, the cacique entered on board with all his train. He appeared in all his regalia. Around his head was a band of small stones of various colours, but principally green, symmetrically arranged, with large white stones at in-

tervals, and connected in front by a large jewel of gold. Two plates of gold were suspended to his ears by rings of very small green stones. To a necklace of white beads, of a kind deemed precious by them, was suspended a large plate in the form of a fleur de lys, of guanin, an inferior species of gold; and a girdle of variegated stones, similar to those round his head, completed his regal decorations. His wife was adorned in a similar manner, having also a very small apron of cotton, and bands of the same round her arms and legs. The daughters were without ornaments, excepting the eldest and handsomest, who had a girdle of small black stones, from which was suspended a tablet, the size of an ivy leaf, composed of various coloured stones, embroidered on network of cotton.

When the cacique entered on board of the ship, he distributed presents of the productions of his island, among the officers and men. The admiral was at this time in his cabin, engaged in his morning devotions. When he appeared on deck, the chieftain hastened to meet him with an animated countenance. "My friend," said he, "I have determined to leave my country, and to accompany thee. I have heard from these Indians who are with thee of the irresistible power of thy sovereigns, and of the many nations thou hast subdued in their name. Whoever refuses obedience to thee, is sure to suffer. Thou hast destroyed the canoes and dwellings of the Caribs, slaying their warriors, and carrying into captivity their wives and children. All the islands are in dread of thee; for who can withstand thee now that thou knowest the secrets of the land, and the weakness of the people. Rather, therefore, than thou shouldst take away my dominions, I will embark with all my household in thy ships, and will go to do homage to thy king and queen, and to be-

hold their marvellous country, of which thy Indians relate such wonders."

When this speech was explained to Columbus, and he beheld the wife, the sons and daughters of the cacique, and thought upon the ills to which their ignorance and simplicity would be exposed, he was touched with compassion, and determined not to take them from their native land. He replied to the cacique, therefore, that he received him under his protection, as a vassal of his sovereigns; but, having many lands yet to visit before he returned to his country, he would call another time, and fulfil his desire. Then taking leave, with many expressions of amity, the cacique, with his wife and daughters and all his retinue, re-embarked in the canoes, returning reluctantly to their island, and the ships continued on their course\*.

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\* Hitherto, in narrating this voyage of Columbus along the coast of Cuba, I have been guided principally by the manuscript history of the curate of los Palacios. His account is the most clear and satisfactory as to names, dates, and routes; and contains many characteristic particulars, not inserted in any other history. His sources of information were of the highest kind. Columbus was his guest after his return to Spain in 1496, and left with him manuscript journals and memorandums; from these he made extracts, collating them with the letters of Dr. Chanca, and other persons of note who had accompanied the admiral.

I have examined two copies of the MS. of the Cura de los Palacios, both in the possession of Mr. O. Rich. One, written in an ancient handwriting of the early part of the 16th century, varies from the other, but only in one or two trivial particulars.

## CHAPTER VII.

VOYAGE ALONG THE SOUTH SIDE OF HISPANIOLA, AND  
RETURN TO ISABELLA.

1494. On the 19th of August, Columbus lost sight of the eastern extremity of Jamaica, to which he gave the name of Cape Farol, at present called Point Morant. Steering eastward, he beheld on the following day that long peninsula of Hispaniola, known by the name of Cape Tiburon, but to which he gave the name of Cape San Miguel. He was not aware that it was a part of the island of Hayti, until, coasting along the southern side, a cacique came off on the 23d of August, and called him by his title, addressing him with several words of Castilian. The sound of these words spread joy through the ship, and the weary seamen heard with delight that they were on the southern coast of Hispaniola. They had still, however, many toilsome days before them. The weather was boisterous, the wind contrary and capricious, and the ships were separated from each other. About the end of August, Columbus anchored at a small island, or rather rock, which rises singly out of the sea opposite to a long cape, stretching southward from the centre of the island, to which he gave the name of Cape Beata. The rock at which he anchored had the appearance at a distance of a tall ship under sail, from which circum-

stance the admiral called it *Alto Velo*. Several seamen were ordered to climb to the top of the island, which commanded a great extent of ocean, and to look out for the other ships. Nothing of them was to be seen. On their return, the sailors killed eight sea-wolves, which were sleeping on the sands. They also knocked down many pigeons and other birds with sticks, and took others with the hand; for in this unfrequented island, the animals seemed to have none of that wildness and timidity produced by the hostility of man.

Being rejoined by the two caravels, he continued along the coast, passing the beautiful country watered by the branches of the *Neyva*, where a fertile plain, covered with villages and groves, extended into the interior. After proceeding some distance further to the east, the admiral learnt from the natives, who came off to the ships, that several Spaniards from the settlement had penetrated to their province. From all that he could learn from these people, every thing appeared to be going on well in the island. Encouraged by the tranquillity of the interior, he landed nine men here, with orders to traverse the island, and give tidings of his safe arrival on the coast.

Continuing to the eastward, he sent a boat on shore for water near a large village, in a plain. The inhabitants issued forth with bows and arrows to make battle, while others were provided with cords to bind prisoners. These were the natives of *Higuey*, the eastern province of *Hispaniola*. They were the most warlike people of the island; having become enured to arms from the frequent descents of the *Caribs*. They were said also to make use of poisoned arrows. In the present instance, their hostility was but in appearance. When the crew landed, they threw by their weapons, brought various articles of food, and asked for the admiral, whose fame had spread throughout the island, and



in whose justice and magnanimity all the natives appeared to repose confidence.

After leaving this place, the weather, which had been so long variable and adverse, began to assume a threatening appearance. A huge fish, as large as a moderate sized whale, raised itself out of the water one day, having a shell on its neck, like that of a tortoise, two great fins like wings, a head the size of a pipe, and a tail like that of a tunny fish. At sight of this fish, and at the indications of the clouds and sky, Columbus anticipated an approaching storm, and sought for some secure harbour\*. He found a channel opening between Hispaniola and a small island called by the natives Adamaney, but to which he gave the name of Saona; here he took refuge, anchoring beside a key or islet in the middle of the channel. On the night of his arrival, there was an eclipse of the moon, and taking an observation, he found the difference of longitude between Saona and Cadiz to be five hours and twenty-three minutes†. This is upwards of eighteen degrees more than the true longitude; an error which must have resulted from the incorrectness of his table of eclipses‡.

For eight days the admiral's ship remained weather-bound in this channel, during which time he suffered great anxiety for the fate of the other vessels, which had not been able to enter, but remained at sea, exposed to the violence of the storm. They escaped, however, uninjured, and once more rejoined him when the weather had moderated.

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\* Herrera, Hist. Ind. Decad. 1, Lib. 11, C. 15. Hist. del Almirante, Cap. 59.

† Herrera, ubi sup. Hist. Almirante, ubi sup.

‡ 5h. 25m. are equal to  $80^{\circ} 45'$ , whereas the true longitude of Saona is  $62^{\circ} 20'$  west of Cadiz.

Leaving the channel of Saona, they reached on the 24th of September the eastern extremity of Hispaniola, to which Columbus gave the name of Cape San Rafael, at present known as Cape Engano. From hence they stood to the southeast, touching at the island of Mona, or as the Indians called it, Amona, situated between Hispaniola and Porto Rico. It was the intention of Columbus, notwithstanding the condition of his ships, to continue further eastward, and to complete the discovery of the Caribbee islands, but his forces did not correspond to the efforts of his lofty spirit\*. The extraordinary fatigues which he had suffered, both in mind and body, during an anxious and harassing voyage of five months,\* had secretly preyed upon his frame. He had shared in all the hardships and privations of the commonest seaman. He had put himself upon the same scanty allowance, and exposed himself to the same buffetings of wind and weather. But he had other cares and trials from which his people were exempt. When the sailor, worn out with the labours of his watch, slept soundly amidst the howling of the storm, the anxious commander maintained his painful vigil, through long sleepless nights, amidst the pelting of the tempest, and the drenching surges of the sea. The safety of his ships depended upon his watchfulness; but above all, he felt that a jealous nation and an expecting world were anxiously attending the result of his enterprises. During a great part of the present voyage, he had been excited by the constant hope of soon arriving at the known parts of India; and by the anticipation of a triumphant return to Spain through the regions of the east, after circumnavigating the globe. When disappointed in this expectation, he was yet stimulated by a conflict with incessant hard-

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\* Muñoz, Hist. N. Mundo, L. 5, C. 22.

ships and perils, as he made his way back against contrary winds and storms. The moment he was relieved from all solicitude, and beheld himself in a known and tranquil sea, the excitement suddenly ceased, and mind and body sunk exhausted by almost superhuman exertions. The very day on which he sailed from Mona he was struck with a sudden malady, which deprived him of memory, of sight, and all his faculties. He fell into a deep lethargy resembling death itself. His crew, alarmed at this profound torpor, feared that death was really at hand. They abandoned, therefore, all further prosecution of the voyage; and spreading their sails to the east wind, so prevalent in those seas, they bore Columbus back, in a state of complete insensibility, to the harbour of Isabella.

# **LIFE AND VOYAGES**

OF

## **CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS.**

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### **BOOK VIII.**

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#### **CHAPTER I.**

##### **ARRIVAL OF THE ADMIRAL AT ISABELLA—CHARACTER OF BARTHOLOMEW COLUMBUS.**

1494. THE sight of the little squadron of Columbus Sept. 4. standing once more into the harbour, was hailed with joy by such of the inhabitants of Isabella as remained faithful to him. The long time that had elapsed since his departure on this exploring voyage, without any tidings arriving from him, had given rise to the most serious apprehensions for his safety; and it began to be feared that he had fallen a victim to his enterprising spirit in some remote part of these unknown seas.

A joyful and heartfelt surprise awaited the admiral on his arrival, in finding at his bed-side his brother Bartholomew, the companion of his youth, his confidential coadjutor, and in a manner his second self, from whom he had been separated for several years. It will be recollected, that about

the time of the admiral's departure from Portugal, he had commissioned Bartholomew to repair to England, and propose his project of discovery to king Henry VII. Of this application to the English court no precise particulars are known. Fernando Columbus states that his uncle, in the course of his voyage, was captured and plundered by a corsair, and reduced to such poverty, that he had for a long time to struggle for a mere subsistence by making sea charts; so that some years elapsed before he made his application to the English monarch. Las Casas thinks that he did not immediately proceed to England, having found a memorandum in his handwriting by which it would appear that he accompanied Bartholomew Diaz in 1486, in his voyage along the coast of Africa, in the service of the king of Portugal, in the course of which voyage was discovered the Cape of Good Hope\*.

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\* The memorandum cited by Las Casas is curious though not conclusive. He says that he found it in an old book belonging to Christopher Columbus, containing the works of Pedro de Aliaco, a learned astronomer and geographer. It was written in the margin of a treatise on the form of the globe, in the handwriting of Bartholomew Columbus, which was well known to Las Casas, as he had many of his letters in his possession. The memorandum was in a barbarous mixture of Latin and Spanish, and to the following effect.

In the year 1488, in December, arrived at Lisbon Bartholomew Diaz, captain of three caravels, which the king of Portugal sent to discover Guinea, and brought accounts that he had discovered six hundred leagues of territory, four hundred and fifty to the south and one hundred and fifty north, to a cape, named by him the Cape of Good Hope; and that by the astrolabe he found the cape 45 degrees beyond the equinoctial line. This cape was 3100 leagues distant from Lisbon: the which the said captain says

It is but justice to the memory of Henry VII to say, that when the proposition was eventually made to him, it met with a more ready attention than from any other sovereign. An agreement was actually made with Bartholomew for the prosecution of the enterprize, and the latter departed for Spain in search of his brother. On reaching Paris, he first received the joyful intelligence that the discovery was already made; that his brother had returned to Spain in triumph; and was actually at the Spanish court, honoured by the sovereigns, caressed by the nobility, and idolized by the people. The glory of Columbus already shed its rays upon his family, and Bartholomew found himself immediately a person of importance. He was noticed by the French monarch, Charles VIII, who understanding that he was low in purse, furnished him with one hundred crowns to defray the expenses of his journey to Spain. He reached Seville just as his brother had departed on his second voyage. Bartholomew immediately repaired to the court, then at Vallado-

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he set down, league by league, in a chart of navigation presented to the king of Portugal; in all which, adds the writer, I was present.

Las Casas expresses a doubt whether Bartholomew wrote this note for himself, or on the part of his brother, but infers that one, or both, were in this expedition. The inference may be correct with respect to Bartholomew, but Christopher, at the time specified, was at the Spanish court.

Las Casas accounts for a difference in date between the foregoing memorandum and the chronicles of the voyage; the former making the return of Diaz in the year '88, the latter '87. This he observes might be because some begin to count the year after Christmas, others at the first of January; and the expedition sailed about the end of August '86, and returned in December '87, after an absence of seventeen months.

lid, taking with him his two nephews, Diego and Fernando, who were to serve in quality of pages to Prince Juan\*. He was received with distinguished favour by the sovereigns; who finding him to be an able and accomplished navigator, gave him the command of three ships freighted with supplies for the colony, and sent him to aid his brother in his enterprizes. He had again arrived too late, reaching Isabella just after the departure of the admiral for the coast of Cuba.

The sight of this brother was an inexpressible relief to Columbus, overwhelmed as he was by cares, and surrounded by strangers. His chief dependence for sympathy and assistance had hitherto been on his brother Don Diego; but his mild and peaceable disposition rendered him little capable of managing the concerns of a factious colony. Bartholomew was of a different and more efficient character. He was prompt, active, decided, and of a fearless spirit; whatever he determined, he carried into instant execution, without regard to difficulty or danger. His person corresponded to his mind; it was tall, muscular, vigorous, and commanding. He had an air of great authority, but somewhat stern, wanting that sweetness and benignity which tempered the authoritative demeanour of the admiral. Indeed, there was a certain asperity in his temper, and a dryness and abruptness in his manners, which made him many enemies; yet notwithstanding these external defects, he was of a generous disposition, free from all arrogance or malevolence, and as placable as he was brave.

He was a thorough seaman, understanding both the theory and practice of his profession; having been formed, in a great measure, under the eye of the admiral, and being but

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\* Hist. del Almirante, Cap. 60.

little inferior to him in science. He was superior to him in the exercise of the pen, according to Las Casas, who had letters and manuscripts of both in his possession. He was acquainted with Latin, but does not appear to have been highly educated; his knowledge, like that of his brother, being chiefly derived from a long course of varied experience and attentive observation. Equally vigorous and penetrating in intellect with the admiral, but less enthusiastic in spirit, and soaring in imagination, and with less simplicity of heart, he surpassed him in the subtle and adroit management of business, was more attentive to his interests, and had more of that worldly wisdom which is so important in the ordinary concerns of life. His genius might never have kindled him up to the sublime speculation which ended in the discovery of a world; but his practical sagacity was calculated to turn that discovery to advantage. Such is the description of Bartholomew Columbus, as furnished by the venerable Las Casas from personal observation\*; and it will be found to accord with his actions throughout the remaining history of the admiral, in the events of which he takes a conspicuous part.

Anxious to relieve himself from the pressure of public business, which weighed heavily upon him during his present malady, Columbus immediately invested his brother Bartholomew with the title and authority of Adelantado, an office equivalent to that of lieutenant-governor. He considered himself entitled to do so, from the articles of his arrangement with the sovereigns; but it was looked upon by King Ferdinand as an undue assumption of power, and gave great offence to that jealous monarch, who was exceedingly tenacious of the prerogatives of the crown, and considered dignities of this rank and importance as only to be conferred

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\* Las Casas, Hist. Ind. L. 1, C. 29.



by royal mandate\*. Columbus, however, was not actuated in this appointment by a mere desire to aggrandize his family. He felt the importance of his brother's assistance in the present critical state of the colony, but that his assistance would be inefficient unless it bore the stamp of high official authority. In fact, during the few months that he had been absent the whole island had become a scene of discord and violence, in consequence of the neglect, or rather the flagrant violation of those rules which he had prescribed for the maintenance of its tranquillity. A brief retrospect of the recent affairs of the colony is here necessary, to explain their present confusion. It will exhibit one of the many instances in which Columbus was doomed to reap the fruits of the evils which had been sown by his adversaries.

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\* Las Casas, Hist. Ind. L. 1, C. 101.

## CHAPTER II.

## MISCONDUCT OF DON PEDRO MARGARITE, AND HIS DEPARTURE FROM THE ISLAND.

1494. It will be recollected, that before departing on his voyage, Columbus had given command of the army to Don Pedro Margarite, with orders to make a military tour of the island; and, while he awed the natives by a display of military force, to conciliate their good will, by the most equitable and amicable treatment.

The island was at this time divided into five domains, each governed by a sovereign cacique, of absolute and hereditary power, to whom a great number of inferior caciques yielded tributary allegiance. The first, or most important domain, comprised the middle part of the Royal Vega. It was a rich, level country, partly cultivated after the imperfect manner of the natives, partly covered with noble forests, studded with Indian towns, and watered by numerous rivers, many of which rolling down from the mountains of Cibao, on its western frontier, had gold dust mingled with their sands. The name of the cacique was Guarionex, whose ancestors had long ruled over the province.

The second, called Marien, was under the sway of Guacanagari, on whose coast Columbus had been wrecked in his first voyage. It was a large and fertile territory, extending along the northern coast, from Cape San Nicholas at the

western extremity of the island, to the great river Yagui, afterwards called Monte Christi, and including the northern part of the Royal Vega, since called the plain of Cape Francois.

The third bore the name of Maguana, and was under the dominion of the Carib cacique Caonabo, the most fierce and puissant of the savage chieftains, and the inveterate enemy of the white men. In this domain were included the gold mines of Cibao.

The fourth took its name from Xaragua, a large lake, and was the most populous and extensive of all. It comprised the whole western coast, including the long promontory of Cape Tiburon, and extended for a considerable distance along the southern side of the island. The inhabitants were finely formed, had a nobler air, a more agreeable elocution, and more soft and graceful manners, than the natives of the other parts of the island. The sovereign was named Behechio; his sister Anacaona, celebrated throughout the island for her charms and graces, was the favourite wife of the neighbouring cacique Caonabo.

The fifth domain was Higüey, and occupied the whole eastern part of the island: being bounded on the north by the river Yagui, and on the south by the Ozema. The inhabitants were the most active and warlike people of the island, having learnt the use of the bow and arrow from the Caribs, who made frequent descents upon their coasts; they were said also to make use of poisoned weapons. Their bravery, however, was but comparative, and was found, eventually, of but little proof against the terror of European arms. They were governed by a cacique named Cotubanama\*.

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\* Charlevoix, *Hist. St. Doming.* I. 1, p. 69.

Such were the five territorial divisions of the island, at the time of its discovery. The amount of its population has never been clearly ascertained; some have stated it at a million of souls\*, though this is considered an exaggeration. It must, however, have been very numerous, and sufficient, in case of any general hostility, to endanger the safety of the handful of Europeans. Columbus trusted for safety, partly to the awe inspired by the weapons and horses of the Spaniards, and the idea of their superhuman nature, but chiefly to the measures he had taken to conciliate the good will of the Indians by gentle and beneficent treatment.

Margarite set forth on his expedition with the greater part of the forces, leaving Alonzo de Ojeda in command of the fortress of St. Thomas. Instead, however, of commencing by exploring the rough mountains of Cibao, as he had been commanded, he drew down into the rich levels of the Vega. Here he lingered among the populous and hospitable Indian villages, forgetful of the object of his command, and of the instructions left him by the admiral. A commander who lapses from duty himself, and yields to the incitements of his passions, is but little calculated to enforce discipline in others. The sensual indulgences of Margarite were imitated by his followers, and his army soon became little better than a crew of riotous marauders. The Indians, for a time, supplied them with provisions, with their wonted hospitality, but the scanty stores of those frugal and improvident people were soon exhausted by the Spaniards; one of whom, they declared, would consume more in a day, than would support an Indian for a month. If provisions were withheld, or scantily furnished, they were taken with violence; nor was any compensation given to the natives, nor

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\* Charlevoix, *Hist. St. Doming.* L. 1, p. 69.

means taken to soothe their irritation. The avidity for gold also led to a thousand acts of injustice and oppression ; but above all, the Spaniards outraged the dearest feelings of the natives, by their licentious conduct with respect to the women. In fact, instead of guests, they soon assumed the tone of imperious masters ; instead of enlightened benefactors, they became sordid and sensual oppressors.

Tidings of these excesses, and of the disgust and impatience that they were awakening among the natives, soon reached Don Diego Columbus. With the concurrence of the council, he wrote to Margarite, reprehending his conduct, and requesting him to proceed on the military tour, according to the commands of the admiral. The pride of Margarite took fire at this reproof ; he considered, or rather pretended to consider himself independent in his command, and above all responsibility to the council for his conduct. Being of an ancient family, also, and a favourite of the king, he affected to look down with contempt upon the newly coined nobility of Diego Columbus. His letters in reply to the orders of the president and council, were couched in a tone either of haughty contumely or of military defiance. He continued with his followers, quartered in the Vega, persisting in a course of outrages and oppressions, fatal to the tranquillity of the island.

He was supported in his arrogant defiance of authority, by the cavaliers and adventurers of noble birth who were in the colony, and who had been deeply wounded in the *pundonor*, the proud punctilio, so jealously guarded by a Spaniard. They could not forget nor forgive the stern equity exercised by the admiral, in a time of emergency, in making them submit to the privations, and share the labours, of the vulgar. Still less could they brook the authority of his brother, Diego, destitute of his high personal claims

to distinction. They formed, therefore, a kind of aristocratical faction in the colony; affecting to consider Columbus and his family as mere mercenary and upstart foreigners, building up their own fortunes at the expense of the toils and sufferings of the community, and the degradation of Spanish hidalgos and cavaliers.

In addition to these partizans, Margarite had a powerful ally in his fellow countryman, father Boil, the head of the religious fraternity, one of the members of the council, and apostolical vicar for the new world. It is not easy to ascertain the original cause of the hostility of this holy friar to the admiral, who was never wanting in respect to persons of his cloth. Various altercations, however, had taken place between them; some say that the friar interfered in respect to the strict measures deemed necessary by the admiral, for the security of the colony; others, that he resented the fancied indignity offered to himself and his household, in putting them on the same short allowance with the common people. He appears, however, to have been generally disappointed, and disgusted, with the sphere of action afforded by the colony, and to have looked back with regret to the old world. He had none of that enthusiastic zeal, and persevering self-devotion, which induced so many of the Spanish missionaries to brave all the hardships and privations of the new world, in the hope of converting its pagan inhabitants.

Encouraged and fortified by such powerful partisans, Margarite really began to consider himself above the temporary authorities of the island. Whenever he came to Isabella, he took no notice of Don Diego Columbus, nor paid any respect to the council, but acted as if he had paramount command. He formed a cabal of the most important of those disaffected to Columbus, and discontented with their abode in the colony. Among these, the leading personage was

father Boil. It was concerted among them to take possession of the ships which had brought out Don Bartholomew Columbus, and to return in them to Spain. Both Margarite and Boil possessed the favour of the king, and they deemed it would be an easy matter to justify their abandonment of their military and religious commands, by a pretended zeal for the public good; hurrying home to represent the disastrous state of the colony, through the tyranny and oppression of its rulers. Some have ascribed the abrupt departure of Margarite to his fear of a severe military investigation of his conduct, on the return of the admiral; others, to his having contracted a malady in the course of his licentious amours, which was unknown at that time to Europeans, and which he attributed to the climate, and hoped to cure by medical assistance in Spain. Whatever may have been the cause, his measures were taken with great precipitancy, without any consultation of the proper authorities, or any regard to the consequences of his departure. Accompanied by a band of malecontents, he and father Boil took possession of certain of the ships in the harbour, and set sail for Spain: the first general and apostle of the new world, thus setting the flagrant example of an unauthorized abandonment of their posts.

## CHAPTER III.

TROUBLES WITH THE NATIVES—ALONZO DE OJEDA BE-  
SIEGED BY CAONABO.

1494. THE departure of Pedro Margarite left the army without a head, and put an end to what little restraint and discipline remained. There is no rabble so licentious as soldiery left to their own discretion in a defenceless country. They now roved about in bands or singly, according to their caprice, scattering themselves among the Indian villages, and indulging in all kinds of excesses, either as prompted by avarice or sensuality. The natives, indignant at having their hospitality thus requited, refused any longer to furnish them with food. In a little while the Spaniards began to experience the pressure of hunger, and seized upon provisions wherever they could be found, accompanying these seizures with acts of wanton violence. At length by a series of flagrant outrages, the gentle and pacific nature of this people was roused to resentment; and from confiding and hospitable hosts they were converted into vindictive enemies. All the precautions enjoined by Columbus having been neglected, the evils he had apprehended came to pass. Though the Indians, naturally timid, dared not contend with the Spaniards while they kept up any combined and disciplined force, yet they took sanguinary vengeance on them whenever they met with small parties or scattered



individuals, roving about in quest of food. Encouraged by these petty triumphs, and the impunity which seemed to attend them, their hostilities grew more open and alarming. Guatiguana, cacique of a large town on the banks of the Grand River, in the dominions of Guarionex, sovereign of the Vega, put to death ten Spaniards, who had quartered themselves in his town, and outraged it by their licentiousness. He followed up this massacre by setting fire to a house in which forty sick Spaniards were lodged\*. Flushed by this success, he menaced with attack a small fortress called Magdalena, which had recently been built in his neighbourhood in the Vega, so that the commander, Luis de Arriaga, having but a feeble garrison, was obliged to remain shut up within its walls, until relief should arrive from Isabella.

The most formidable enemy of the Spaniards, however, was Caonabo, the Carib cacique of Maguana, the same who had surprised and massacred the garrison of the fortress at La Navidad. He had natural talents for war, and intelligence superior to the ordinary range of savage intellect. He had a proud and daring spirit to urge him on, three valiant brothers to assist him, and a numerous tribe at his command†. He had always felt jealous of the intrusion of the white men into the island; but when he beheld the fortress of St. Thomas erected in the very centre of his dominions, he was roused to indignation. As long as the army lay within call in the Vega, he was deterred from any attack. But when, on the departure of Margarite, the army became dismembered and dispersed, the time for striking a signal blow seemed arrived. The fortress remained isolated, with

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\* Herrera, *Hist. Ind.* Decad. 1, L. 2, C. 16.

† Herrera, *ubi sup.*

a garrison of only fifty men. By a sudden and secret movement he might overwhelm it with his forces, and repeat the horrors which he had wreaked upon La Navidad.

The wily cacique, however, had a different kind of enemy to deal with in the commander of St. Thomas. Alonso de Ojeda had been schooled in Moorish warfare. He was versed in all kinds of feints, stratagems, lurking ambuscades, and wild assaults. No man was more fitted, therefore, to cope with Indian warriors. He had a vehement and headlong courage, arising partly from the natural heat and vivacity of his temperament, and in a great measure from religious superstition. He had been engaged in wars with Moors and Indians, in public battles and private combats; in fights, feuds, and encounters of all kinds; to which he had been prompted by a rash and fiery spirit, and a love of adventure; yet he had never been wounded, nor had lost a drop of blood. He began to doubt whether any weapon had power to harm him, and to consider himself under the especial protection of the holy virgin. As a kind of religious talisman, he had a small Flemish painting of the virgin, which had been given him by his patron Fonseca, bishop of Badajos. This he constantly carried with him, in city, camp, or field, making it the object of his frequent orisons and invocations. In garrison or encampment, it was suspended in his chamber or his tent; in his rough expeditions in the wilderness he carried it in his knapsack, and whenever leisure permitted, would take it out, fix it against a tree, and address to it his prayers\*. In a word, he swore by the virgin; he invoked the virgin, whether in brawl or battle; and under favour of the virgin, he was ready for any enter-

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\* Herrera, *Hist. Ind.* Decad. 1, L. 8, C. 4. Pizarro, *Varones Ilustres*, Cap. 8.

prize or adventure; and the more hazardous and extravagant the better. Such was this Alonzo de Ojeda, bigotted in his devotion, reckless in his life, fearless in his spirit, like many of the roving Spanish cavaliers of those days. Though diminutive in size, he was a prodigy of strength and prowess; and the chroniclers of the early discoveries relate marvels of his qualities and deeds.

Having reconnoitred the fortress, Caonabo assembled ten thousand warriors, armed with war-clubs, bows and arrows, and lances hardened in the fire; and making his way secretly through the forests, came suddenly in the neighbourhood, expecting to surprise the garrison in a state of careless security. He found Ojeda, however, drawn up warily within his tower, which, being perched upon an almost insulated height, with a river nearly surrounding it, and the remainder traversed by a deep ditch, set at defiance an open attack by naked warriors.

Foiled in his attempt, Caonabo now hoped to reduce it by famine. For this purpose, he spread his army through the adjacent forests; and waylaid every pass, so as to intercept any supplies brought by the natives, and to cut off any foraging party from the fortress. This siege, or investment, lasted for thirty days\*, during which time the garrison was reduced to great distress. There is a traditional anecdote, which Oviedo relates of Pedro Margarite, the former commander of this fortress, but which may with more probability be ascribed to Alonzo de Ojeda, as having occurred during this siege. At a time when the garrison was sore pressed by famine, an Indian gained access to the fort, bringing a couple of wood-pigeons for the table of the commander. The latter was in a chamber of the tower, surrounded by

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\* P. Martyr, Decad. 1, Lib. 4.

several of his officers. Seeing them regard the birds with the wistful eyes of famishing men, "it is a pity," said he, "that here is not enough to afford us all a meal; I cannot consent to feast while the rest of you are starving;" so saying, he turned loose the pigeons from a window of the tower.

During the siege, Ojeda displayed the greatest activity of spirit, and fertility of resources. He baffled all the arts of the Carib chieftain, concerting stratagems of various kinds, to relieve the garrison and annoy the foe. He made desperate sallies whenever the enemy appeared in any force, always leading the van, with that headlong valour for which he was noted; making great slaughter with his single arm, and as usual escaping unhurt from amidst showers of darts and arrows.

Caonabo saw many of his bravest warriors laid low. His forces were daily diminishing, for the Indians, unused to any protracted operations of war, grew weary of this siege, and began to disperse, returning daily in numbers to their homes. He gave up all further attempt, therefore, on the fortress, and retired filled with admiration of the prowess and achievements of Ojeda\*.

The restless chieftain was not discouraged by the failure of this enterprise, but meditated schemes of a bolder and more extensive nature. Prowling in secret about the vicinity of Isabella, he noted the enfeebled state of the settlement†. Many of the inhabitants were suffering under various maladies, and most of the men capable of bearing arms were distributed about the country. He now conceived the project of a general league among the caciques, to as-

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\* Oviedo, *Cronica de las Indias*, Lib. 3, C. 1.

† *Hist. del Almirante*, C. 60.

semble their forces, and surprise and overwhelm the settlement; and to massacre the Spaniards wherever they should be found. This handful of intruders once exterminated, he trusted that the island would be delivered from all further molestation of the kind; little dreaming of the hopeless nature of this contest, and that where the civilized man once plants his foot, the power of the savage is gone for ever.

Reports of the profligate conduct of the Spaniards had spread throughout the island, and inspired hatred and hostility even among tribes who had never beheld them, nor suffered from their misdeeds. Caonabo found three of the sovereign caciques inclined to co-operate with him, though impressed with deep awe of the supernatural power of the Spaniards, and of their terrific arms and animals. The league, however, met with unexpected opposition in the fifth cacique, Guacanagari, the sovereign of Marien. His conduct, in this time of danger, completely manifested the injustice of those suspicions, which had been entertained of him by the Spaniards. He refused to join the other caciques with his forces, or to violate those laws of hospitality, by which he had considered himself bound to protect and aid the white men, ever since they had been shipwrecked on his coast. He remained quietly in his dominions, entertaining at his own expense a hundred of the suffering soldiery, and supplying all their wants with his accustomed generosity. This conduct drew upon him the odium and hostility of his fellow caciques, particularly of the fierce Caonabo and his brother-in-law Behechio. They made irruptions into his territories, and inflicted on him various injuries and indignities. Behechio killed one of his wives, and Caonabo carried another away captive\*. Nothing, however, could shake

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\* Hist. del Almirante, Cap. 60.

the devotion of Guacanagari to the Spaniards; and as his dominions lay immediately adjacent to the settlement, and those of some of the other caciques were very remote, the want of his co-operation impeded for some time the hostile designs of the confederates\*.

Such was the critical state to which the affairs of the colony had been reduced, and such the bitter hostility engendered among the kind and gentle people of the island, during the absence of Columbus; and precisely in consequence of violating all his regulations. Margarite and father Boil had hastened to Spain, to make prejudiced representations of the miseries of the island. Had they remained faithfully at their posts, and discharged zealously the trusts confided to them, those miseries might have been easily remedied, if not entirely prevented.

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\* Herrera, *Hist. Ind. Decad.* 1, L. 2, C. 16.

## CHAPTER IV.

MEASURES OF COLUMBUS TO RESTORE THE QUIET OF  
THE ISLAND—EXPEDITION OF OJEDA TO SURPRISE  
CAONABO.

**1494.** IMMEDIATELY after the return of Columbus from Cuba, while he was yet confined to his bed by indisposition, he was gratified by a voluntary visit from Guacanagari. This kind-hearted chieftain manifested the greatest concern at his illness, for he appears always to have entertained an affectionate reverence for the admiral. He again spoke with tears of the massacre at fort Nativity, dwelling on the exertions he had made in defence of the Spaniards. He now informed Columbus of the secret league forming among the caciques, of his opposition to it, and the consequent persecution he had suffered; of the murder of one of his wives, and the capture of another. He urged the admiral to be on his guard against the designs of Caonabo, and offered to lead his subjects to the field to fight by the side of the Spaniards, as well out of friendship for them, as in revenge of his own injuries\*.

Columbus had always retained a deep sense of the ancient kindness of Guacanagari, and had been unwilling to doubt his faith and friendship; he was rejoiced, therefore, to have

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\* Herrera, Hist. Ind. Decad. 1, L. 2, C. 16.

all suspicion thus effectually dispelled. Their former amicable intercourse was renewed, with this difference, that the man whom Guacanagari had once soothed and succoured when a shipwrecked stranger on his shores, had suddenly become the arbiter of the fate of himself and all his countrymen.

The manner in which this peaceful island had been exasperated and embroiled by the licentious conduct of the Europeans, was a matter of deep concern to Columbus. He saw all his plans of deriving an immediate revenue to the sovereigns completely impeded. To restore the island to tranquillity, required skilful management. His forces were but small, and the awe in which the natives had stood of the white men, as supernatural beings, had been in some degree dispelled. He was too ill to take a personal share in any warlike enterprize, his brother Diego was not of a military character, and Bartholomew was yet a stranger among the Spaniards, and regarded by the leading ones with jealousy. Still Columbus considered the threatened combination of the caciques as but imperfectly formed; he trusted to their want of skill and experience in warfare, and conceived that by prompt measures, by proceeding in detail, punishing some, conciliating others, and uniting force, gentleness and stratagem, he might succeed in dispelling the threatened storm.

His first care was to send a body of armed men to the relief of fort Magdalena, menaced with destruction by Guatiguana, the cacique of the Grand river, who had massacred the Spaniards quartered in his town. Having relieved the fortress, the troops overran the territory of Guatiguana, killing many of his warriors, and carrying others off captive; the chieftain himself made his escape\*. He was tribu-

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\* Herrera, Decad. 1, L. 2, C. 16.



tary to Guarionex, the sovereign cacique of the Royal Vega. As this Indian prince reigned over a great and populous extent of country, his friendship was highly important to the prosperity of the colony, while there was imminent risk of his hostility from the unbridled excesses of the Spaniards who had been quartered in different parts of his dominions. Columbus sent for him, therefore, and explained to him that these excesses had been in violation of his orders, and contrary to his good intentions towards the natives, whom it was his wish in every way to please and benefit. He explained, likewise, that the expedition against Guatiguana was an act of mere individual punishment, not of hostility against the territories of Guarionex. The cacique was of a quiet and placable disposition, and whatever anger he might have felt was easily soothed: to link him in some degree to the Spanish interest, Columbus prevailed on him to give his daughter in marriage to an Indian interpreter, native of the Lucayan islands, who had been to Spain, and had been baptized in Barcelona with the name of Diego Colon\*. He took a still stronger precaution to guard against any hostility on the part of the cacique, and to ensure tranquillity in the important region of the Vega. He ordered a fortress to be erected in the midst of his territories, which he named Fort Conception. The easy cacique agreed without hesitation to a measure, fraught with ruin to himself, and future slavery to his subjects.



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\* P. Martyr, Decad. 1, L. 4.

N. B. Sig'r Gio. Batista Spotorno, in his memoir of Columbus, has been led into an error by the name of this Indian, and observes that Columbus had a brother named Diego, of whom he seemed to be ashamed, and whom he married to the daughter of an Indian chief.

The most formidable enemy remained to be disposed of: Caonabo, the warlike spirit of the island, the active and daring enemy of the white men ; and who, from superior notions of policy, was capable of forming dangerous leagues and conspiracies. His territories lay in the central and mountainous parts of the island, rendered difficult of access by rugged rocks, entangled forests, and frequent rivers. To make war upon this subtle and ferocious chieftain in the depths of his wild woodland territory, and among the fastnesses of his mountains, where at every step there would be danger of falling into some sudden ambush, would be a work of time, peril, and incertitude. In the meanwhile, the settlements would never be secure from his secret and daring enterprizes, and the working of the mines would be subject to frequent interruption. While perplexed on this subject, Columbus was relieved by a bold proposition on the part of Alonzo de Ojeda, who offered to take the Carib chieftain by stratagem, and deliver him alive into his hands. The project was wild, hazardous and romantic, characteristic of the fearless and adventurous spirit of Ojeda, who was fond of distinguishing himself by extravagant exploits, as has been shown in his singular feat on the Giralda of Seville.

Choosing ten bold and hardy followers, well armed and well mounted, and invoking the protection of his patroness the virgin, whose image as usual he bore with him as a safeguard, Ojeda plunged into the forest, and made his way above sixty leagues at the head of his followers, into the wild territories of Caonabo, where he found the cacique in one of his most populous towns. Ojeda approached Caonabo with great deference and respect, treating him as a sovereign prince. He informed him that he had come on a friendly embassy from the admiral, who was Guamiquina or chief of the Spaniards, and who had sent him an invaluable present.

Caonabo had tried Ojeda in battle, he had witnessed his fiery prowess, and had conceived a warrior's admiration of him. He received him with a degree of chivalrous courtesy, if such a phrase may apply to the savage state and rude hospitality of a wild warrior of the forests. The free, fearless deportment, the great personal strength, and the surprising agility and adroitness of Ojeda in all manly exercises, and in the use of all kinds of weapons, were calculated to delight a savage, and he soon became a great favourite with Caonabo.

Ojeda now used all his influence to prevail upon the cacique to repair to Isabella, for the purpose of making a treaty with Columbus, and becoming the ally and friend of the Spaniards. It is said that he offered him, as a lure, the bell of the chapel of Isabella. This bell was the wonder of the island. When the Indians heard its melody sounding through the forests as it rung for mass, and beheld the Spaniards hastening towards the chapel, they imagined that it talked, and that the white men obeyed it. With that feeling of superstition with which they regarded all things connected with the Spaniards, they looked upon this bell as something supernatural, and in their usual phrase, said it had come from Turey, or the skies. Caonabo had heard this wonderful instrument at a distance, in the course of his prowlings about the settlement, and had longed to see it; but when it was proffered to him as a present of peace, he found it impossible to resist the temptation.

The cacique agreed, therefore, to set out for Isabella; but when the time came to depart, Ojeda beheld with surprise a powerful force of warriors assembled, and ready to march. He asked the meaning of taking such an army on a mere friendly visit, to which the cacique proudly replied, that it was not befitting a great prince, like him, to go forth

scantly attended. Ojeda felt little satisfied with this reply; he knew the warlike character of Caonabo, and his deep subtilty, which is the soul of Indian warfare; he feared some sinister design, and that the chieftain might meditate some surprise of the fortress of Isabella, or some attempt upon the person of the admiral. He knew also that it was the wish of Columbus, either to make peace with the cacique, or to get possession of his person without the alternative of open warfare. He had recourse to a stratagem, therefore, which has an air of fable and romance, but which is recorded by all the contemporary historians, with trivial variations, and which Las Casas assures us was in current circulation in the island when he arrived there, about six years after the event. It accords, too, with the adventurous and extravagant character of the man, and with the wild stratagems and vaunting exploits incident to Indian warfare. In the course of their march, having halted near the river Yagui, Ojeda one day produced a set of manacles of polished steel, so highly burnished that they looked like silver. These he assured Caonabo were royal ornaments which had come from heaven, or the Turey of Biscay\*; that they were worn by the monarchs of Castile on solemn dances, and other high festivities, and were intended as presents to the cacique. He proposed that Caonabo should go to the river and bathe, after which he should be decorated with these ornaments, mounted on the horse of Ojeda, and should return in the state of a Spanish monarch, to astonish his subjects. The cacique, with that fondness for glittering ornaments common to savages, was dazzled with the sight; his proud military spirit, also, was flattered with the idea of bestriding one of those

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\* The principal iron manufactories of Spain are established in Biscay, where that mineral is found in abundance.

tremendous animals, so dreaded by his countrymen. He accompanied Ojeda and his followers to the river, with but few attendants, dreading nothing from nine or ten strangers when thus surrounded by his army. After the cacique had bathed in the river, he was assisted to mount behind Ojeda, and the shackles were then adjusted. This done, they pranced round among the savages, who were astonished to behold their cacique in glittering array, and mounted on one of those fearful animals. Ojeda made several circuits to gain space, followed by his little band of horsemen; the Indians shrinking back with affright from the prancing steeds. At length he made a wide sweep into the forest, until the trees shut him from the sight of the army. His followers then closed round him, and drawing their swords, threatened Canabo with instant death if he made the least noise or resistance, though indeed his manacles and shackles effectually prevented the latter. They bound him with cords to Ojeda to prevent his falling, or effecting an escape; then putting spurs to their horses, they dashed across the Yagui, and made off through the woods with their prize\*.

They had now fifty or sixty leagues of wilderness to traverse on their way homewards, with here and there large Indian towns. They had borne off their captive by dint of hoof far beyond the pursuit of his subjects; but the utmost vigilance was requisite to prevent his escape during this long and toilsome journey, and to prevent exciting the hostilities

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\* This romantic exploit of Ojeda is recorded at large by Las Casas, by his copyist Herrera, (*Decad.* 1, L. 2, C. 16,) by Fernando Pizarro in his *Varones Ilustres del Nuevo Mundo*, and by Charlevoix in his *History of St. Domingo*. Peter Martyr and others have given it more concisely, alluding to, but not inserting, its romantic details.

of any confederate cacique. They had to avoid the populous parts of the country, therefore, or to pass through the Indian towns on the gallop. They suffered greatly from fatigue, hunger, and watchfulness; encountering many perils, fording and swimming the numerous rivers of the plains, toiling through the deep tangled forests, and clambering over the high and rocky mountains. They accomplished all in safety, and Ojeda entered Isabella in triumph from this most hairbrained and characteristic enterprize, with his wild Indian warrior bound behind him a captive. Columbus could not refrain from expressing his great satisfaction when this dangerous foe was delivered into his hands. The haughty Carib met him with an air lofty and unsubdued, disdaining to conciliate him by submission, or to deprecate his vengeance for the blood which he had shed of white men. He never bowed his spirit to captivity; on the contrary, though completely at the mercy of the Spaniards, he displayed that boasting defiance which is a part of Indian heroism, and which the savage maintains towards his tormentors even amidst the agonies of the faggot and the stake. He vaunted his achievement in surprising and burning the fortress of Nativity, and slaughtering its garrison, and declared that he had secretly reconnoitred Isabella with an intention of wreaking upon it the same desolation\*.

Columbus, though struck with the wild heroism of this fierce chieftain, considered him a dangerous enemy, whom, for the peace of the island, it was necessary carefully to guard. He determined to send him to Spain; in the meantime, he ordered that he should be treated with kindness and respect, and lodged him in a part of his own dwelling house, where, however, he kept him a close prisoner in chains, pro-

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\* Hist. del Almirante, Cap. 60.

bably in the splendid shackles which had ensnared him. This precaution must have been necessary from the insecurity of his prison, for Las Casas observes that the admiral's house not being spacious, nor having many chambers, the captive chieftain could be seen by passers by from the portal\*.

Caonabo always maintained a haughty deportment towards Columbus, while he never evinced the least animosity against Ojeda for the artifice to which he had fallen a victim. It rather increased his admiration of him, as a consummate warrior, looking upon it as the exploit of a master spirit to have pounced upon him, and borne him off in this hawk-like manner from the very midst of his fighting men. There is nothing that an Indian more admires in warfare than a deep well executed stratagem.

Columbus was accustomed to bear himself with an air of dignity and authority as admiral and viceroy, and exacted great personal respect. When he entered the apartment, therefore, where Caonabo was confined, all present rose, according to custom, and paid him reverence. The cacique alone neither moved, nor took any notice of him. On the contrary, when Ojeda entered, though small in person, and of no state, Caonabo immediately rose and saluted him with profound respect. On being asked the reason of this, Columbus being Guamiquina, or great chief over all, and Ojeda but one of his subjects, the proud Carib replied that the admiral had never dared to come personally to his house and seize him, it was only through the valour of Ojeda he was his prisoner; to Ojeda, therefore, he owed reverence, not to the admiral†.

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\* Las Casas, Hist. Ind. L. 1, C. 102.

† Idem, ubi sup.

The captivity of Caonabo was deeply felt by his subjects, for the natives of this island seem generally to have been extremely loyal, and strongly attached to their caciques. One of the brothers of Caonabo, a warrior of great courage and address, and very popular among the Indians, assembled an army of more than seven thousand men, and led them secretly to the neighbourhood of St. Thomas, where Ojeda was again in command. His intention was to surprise a number of Spaniards, in hopes of obtaining his brother in exchange for them. Ojeda as usual had notice of the design, but was not to be again shut up in his fortress. Having been reinforced by a detachment sent by the adelantado, he left a sufficient force in garrison, and with the remainder, and his little troop of horse, set off boldly to meet the savages. The brother of Caonabo, when he saw the Spaniards approaching, showed some military skill, disposing of his army in five battalions. The impetuous attack of Ojeda, however, who, according to his custom, rushed on furiously in the advance with his handful of horsemen, threw the Indian warriors into sudden panic. They could not withstand the terrible appearance of these glittering steel-clad beings, wielding their flashing weapons, and bestriding animals which appeared to be ferocious beasts of prey. They threw down their weapons and took to flight; many were slain, more were taken prisoners, and among the latter was the brother of Caonabo, bravely fighting in a pious but desperate cause\*.

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\* Oviedo, *Cronica de las Indias*, L. 3, C. 1. Charlevoix, *Hist. S. Doming*. Lib. 2, p. 131.



## CHAPTER V.

ARRIVAL OF ANTONIO DE TORRES WITH FOUR SHIPS  
FROM SPAIN—HIS RETURN WITH INDIAN SLAVES.

1494. THE colony was still suffering greatly from want of provisions: the European stock was nearly exhausted, and such was the idleness and improvidence of the colonists, or the confusion into which they had been thrown by the hostilities of the natives, or such was their exclusive eagerness after the precious metals, that they seem to have neglected the true wealth of the island, its quick and fertile soil, and to have been in constant danger of famine, in the midst of an abundant nature.

At length their famished sufferings were relieved by the arrival of four ships, commanded by Antonio Torres. They brought an ample supply of provisions, which diffused universal joy. There were also a physician and an apothecary, whose aid was greatly needed in the sickly state of the colony; but above all, there were mechanics, millers, fishermen, gardeners, and husbandmen, the true, wholesome kind of population for a colony, calculated to bring out its best resources, and to produce that interchange of useful labour, and of the necessities of life, which renders a community thriving and self-dependent.

The letters from the sovereigns brought by Torres, (dated 16 Aug. 1494,) were of the most gratifying kind, expressing

the highest satisfaction at the accounts sent home by the admiral, and acknowledging that every thing in the course of his discoveries had turned out as he had predicted. They evinced the liveliest interest in the affairs of the colony, and a desire of receiving frequent advices as to its circumstances; proposing that a caravel should sail each month from Isabella and Spain. They informed him that all differences with Portugal were amicably adjusted, and acquainted him with the conventional agreement with that power, relative to a geographical line, separating their newly discovered possessions; requesting him to have regard to this agreement in the course of his discoveries. As in adjusting the arrangement with Portugal, and in drawing the proposed line, it was important to have the best advice, the sovereigns requested Columbus to return, and be present at the convention; or, in case that should be inconvenient, to send his brother Bartholomew, or any other person whom he should consider fully competent, furnished with such maps, charts, and designs, as might be of service in the negotiation\*.

There was another letter addressed generally to the inhabitants of the colony, and to all who should go out on voyages of discovery, commanding them to obey Columbus as implicitly as they would the sovereigns themselves, under pain of their high displeasure, and a fine of ten thousand maravedis for each offence.

Such was the well-merited confidence reposed at this moment by the sovereigns in Columbus, but which was soon to be blighted by the insidious offices of worthless men. He was already aware of the complaints and misrepresentations which had been sent home from the colony, and which would be enforced by Margarite and father Boil. He was aware

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\* Herrera, Decad. 1, L. 2, C. 17.

that he had that slippery standing which a stranger always possesses, in the service of a foreign country'; where he has no friends nor connexions to prop him up, and where even his very merits increase the eagerness of envy to cast him down. His efforts to promote the working of the mines, and to explore the resources of the island, had been impeded by the misconduct of Margarite, and the disorderly life of the Spaniards in general; yet he apprehended that the very evils which they had produced would be alleged against him, and the want of profitable returns be cited to discredit and embarrass his expeditions.

To counteract any misrepresentations of the kind, Columbus hastened the return of the ships, and would have returned with them, not merely to comply with the wishes of the sovereigns in being present at the drawing of the geographical line, but to vindicate himself and his enterprises from the aspersions of his enemies. The malady, however, which confined him to his bed, prevented his departure; and his brother Bartholomew was required to aid, with his practical good sense and his resolute spirit, in regulating the disordered affairs of the island. It was determined, therefore, to send home his brother Diego, to attend to the wishes of the sovereigns, and to take care of his interests at court. At the same time, he exerted himself to the utmost to send by the ships satisfactory proofs of the value of his discoveries. He remitted by them all the gold that he could collect, with specimens of other metals, and of various fruits, and valuable plants, which he had collected either in Hispaniola, or in the course of his voyage. In his eagerness to produce immediate profit, and to indemnify the sovereigns for those expenses which bore hard upon the royal treasury, he sent, likewise, above five hundred Indian prisoners, who, he suggested, might be sold as slaves at Seville.

It is painful to find the brilliant renown of Columbus sullied by so foul a stain, and the glory of his enterprizes degraded by such flagrant violations of human right. The customs of the times, however, must be pleaded in his apology. The precedent had been given long before, by both Spaniards and Portuguese, in their African discoveries, wherein the traffic in slaves had formed one of the greatest sources of profit. In fact, the practice had been sanctioned by the highest authority; by that of the church itself; and the most learned theologians had pronounced all barbarous and infidel nations, who shut their ears to the truths of Christianity, as fair objects of war and rapine, of captivity and slavery. If Columbus needed any practical illustration of this doctrine, he had it in the conduct of Ferdinand himself, in his late wars with the Moors of Granada, in which he had always been surrounded by a cloud of ghostly advisers, and had professed to do every thing for the glory and advancement of the faith. In this holy war, as it was termed, it was a common practice to make inroads into the Moorish territories and carry off *cavalgadas*, not merely of flocks and herds, but of human beings, and those, not warriors taken with weapons in their hands, but quiet villagers, labouring peasantry, and helpless women and children. These were carried to the mart at Seville, or to other populous towns, and sold into slavery. The capture of Malaga was a memorable instance, where, as a punishment for an obstinate and brave defence, which should have excited admiration rather than revenge, eleven thousand people, of both sexes, and of all ranks and ages, many of them highly cultivated, and delicately reared, were suddenly torn from their homes, severed from each other, and swept into menial slavery, even though half of their ransoms had been paid. These circumstances are not advanced to vindicate, but to palliate the con-

duct of Columbus. He acted but in conformity to the customs of the times, and was sanctioned by the example of the sovereign under whom he served.

Las Casas, the zealous and enthusiastic advocate of the Indians, who suffers no opportunity to escape him of exclaiming in vehement terms against their slavery, speaks with indulgence of Columbus on this head. If those pious and learned men, he observes, whom the sovereigns had for eyes and light, were so ignorant of the injustice of this practice, it is no wonder that the admiral should be ignorant of it, who was not a learned man\*.

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\* Las Casas, Hist. Ind. T. 1, Cap. 122. MS.

## CHAPTER VI.

EXPEDITION OF COLUMBUS AGAINST THE INDIANS OF  
THE VEGA—BATTLE.

1494. NOTWITHSTANDING the defeat of the Indians by Ojeda, they still retained hostile intentions against the Spaniards. The idea of their cacique being a prisoner and in chains, enraged the natives of Maguana, and the general sympathy manifested by other tribes of the island show how widely that intelligent savage had extended his influence, and how greatly he was admired. He had still active and powerful relatives remaining to attempt his rescue, or revenge his fall. One of his brothers, Manicáotex by name, a Carib, bold and warlike as himself, succeeded to the sway over his subjects. His favourite wife also, Anacaona, so famous for her charms, had great influence over her brother Behechio, cacique of the populous province of Xaragua. Through these means a violent and general hostility to the Spaniards was excited throughout the island, and the formidable league of the caciques, which Caonabo had in vain attempted to accomplish when at large, was produced by his captivity. Guacanagari, the cacique of Marien, alone remained friendly to the Spaniards, giving them timely information of the gathering storm, and offering to take the field with them as a faithful ally.

The protracted illness of Columbus, the scantiness of his military force, and the wretched state of the colonists in general, reduced by sickness and scarcity to great bodily weakness, had hitherto induced him to try every means of conciliation and stratagem to avert and dissolve the confederacy. He had at length recovered his health; and his followers were in some degree refreshed and invigorated by the supplies brought by the ships. At this time he received intelligence that the allied caciques were actually assembled in great force in the Vega, within two days' march of Isabella, with an intention of making a general assault upon the settlement, and overwhelming it by numbers. Columbus resolved to take the field at once, and to carry the war into the territories of the enemy, rather than suffer it to be brought to his own doors.

The whole sound and effective force that he could muster in the present infirm state of the colony, did not exceed two hundred infantry and twenty horse. They were armed with crossbows, swords, lances, and espingardas, or heavy arquebusses, which in those days were used with rests, and sometimes mounted on wheels. With these formidable weapons, besides being cased in steel, and covered with bucklers, a handful of European warriors were able to cope with thousands of naked savages. They had aid of another kind, however, consisting of twenty bloodhounds, animals scarcely less terrible to the Indians than the horses, and infinitely more fatal. They were fearless and ferocious; nothing daunted them, nor, when they had once seized upon their prey, could any thing compel them to relinquish their hold. The naked bodies of the Indians offered no defence to their assaults. They sprang on them, dragged them to the earth, and tore them to pieces.

The admiral was accompanied in this expedition by his brother Bartholomew, whose counsel and aid he sought on all occasions, and who was not merely of great personal force and undaunted courage, but of a strong military turn of mind. Guacanagari also brought his people into the field; neither he nor his subjects, however, were of a war-like character, nor calculated to render much assistance. The chief advantage of his co-operation was, that it completely severed him from the other caciques, and ensured the dependence of himself and his subjects upon the Spaniards. In the present infant state of the colony, its chief security depended upon jealousies and dissensions sown among the native powers of the island.

It was on the 24th of March, 1495, that Columbus  
1495.

issued forth from Isabella with his little army, and advanced by marches of ten leagues a day in quest of the enemy. He ascended again to the mountain pass of the cavaliers, from whence he had first looked down upon the Vega. With what different feelings did he now contemplate it! The vile passions of the white men had already converted this smiling, beautiful, and once peaceful and hospitable region into a land of wrath and hostility. Wherever the smoke of an Indian town rose from among the trees and loaded the clear atmosphere, it marked a horde of exasperated enemies, and the deep rich forests below him swarmed with lurking warriors. In the picture which his imagination had drawn of the peaceful and inoffensive nature of this people, he had flattered himself with the idea of ruling over them as a patron and benefactor, but now he found forced upon him the character of a conqueror.

The Indians had notice, by their scouts, of his approach, but though they had already had some slight experience of the warfare of the white men, they were filled with confi-



dence by the vast superiority of their numbers, which it is said amounted to one hundred thousand men\*. This is probably an exaggeration, for as Indians never draw out into the open field, in order of battle, but lurk among the forests, it is difficult to ascertain their force. Their rapid movements also, and their sudden sallies and retreats from various parts, together with the wild shouts and yells from opposite quarters of the woodlands, are calculated to give an exaggerated idea of their number. The army, however, must have been great, as it consisted of the combined forces of several caciques of this populous island. It was commanded by Manicaotex, the brother of Caonabo. The Indians, who were little skilled in numerals, and incapable of counting beyond ten, had a simple mode of ascertaining and describing the force of an enemy, telling forth a grain of maize or Indian corn for every warrior. When, therefore, the spies, who had watched from rocks and thickets the march of Columbus, came back with a mere handful of corn as the amount of his army, the caciques scoffed at the idea of so scanty a number making head against their countless multitude†.

Columbus drew near to the enemy about the place where the town of St. Jago has since been built. Having ascertained the great force of the Indians, Don Bartholomew advised that their little army should be divided into detachments, and attack at the same moment from several quarters. The plan was adopted. The infantry separating into different bodies, advanced suddenly from various directions, with great din of drums and trumpets, and a destructive discharge of firearms from the covert of the trees. The In-

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\* Las Casas, Hist. Ind. L. 1, Cap. 104. MS.

† Idem, ubi sup.

dians were struck with panic, and thrown into complete confusion. An army seemed pressing upon them from every quarter. Their fellow warriors were laid low by the balls of the arquebusses, which seemed to burst with thunder and lightning from the forests. While driven together and confounded by these attacks, Alonzo de Ojeda charged impetuously on their main body with his troop of cavalry, cutting his way into the centre with lance and sabre. The horses bore down the terrified Indians, while their riders dealt their blows on all sides unopposed. The bloodhounds were at the same time let loose, and rushed with sanguinary fury upon the naked savages, seizing them by the throat, dragging them to the earth, and tearing out their bowels. The Indians, unaccustomed to large and fierce quadrupeds of any kind, were struck with horror when assailed by these ferocious animals. They thought the horses equally fierce and devouring. The contest, if such it might be called, was of short duration. What resistance could a multitude of naked, unwarlike, and undisciplined savages make, with no other arms than clubs and arrows, and darts hardened in the fire, against soldiers clad in iron, wielding weapons of steel, and tremendous firearms, and aided by ferocious monsters whose very aspect struck terror to the heart of the stoutest warrior !

The Indians fled in every direction with yells and howlings ; some clambered to the top of rocks and precipices, from whence they made piteous supplications and offers of complete submission ; many were killed, many made prisoners, and the confederacy was for the time completely broken up and dispersed.

Guacanagari had accompanied the Spaniards into the field, according to his promise ; but he was little more than a spectator of this battle, or rather rout. He was not of a mar-

tial spirit, and both he and his subjects must have shrunk with awe at this unusual and terrific burst of war, even though on the part of their allies. His participation in the hostilities of the white men was never forgiven by the other caciques, and he returned to his dominions followed by the hatred and execrations of all the islanders.

## CHAPTER VII.

## SUBJUGATION OF THE NATIVES—IMPOSITION OF TRIBUTE.

1495. COLUMBUS followed up his victory by making a military tour through various parts of the island, and reducing it to obedience. The natives made occasional attempts at opposition, but they were easily checked. The troop of cavalry headed by Ojeda was found of great efficacy in this service, from the rapidity of its movements, the active intrepidity of its commander, and especially from the great awe and terror inspired by the horses. There was no service too wild and hazardous for Ojeda. If any head of war arose in a distant part of the country, he would penetrate with his little squadron of hard riders through the depths of the forests and fall suddenly like a thunderbolt upon the enemy, disconcerting all their combinations, and enforcing implicit submission. Las Casas, in speaking of the great dread which the natives had of the horses, repeatedly mentions the idea which they entertained, on first beholding a mounted cavalier, that the rider and the horse formed one animal\*; a circumstance which corroborates the alleged origin of the ancient fable of the Centaurs.

The Royal Vega was soon brought into subjection. Being an immense plain, perfectly level, it was easily overrun

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\* Las Casas, L. 1, C. 102. 104.

by the horsemen, whose appearance struck terror into its most populous towns. Guarionex, its sovereign cacique, was of a mild and placable character, and though he had been roused to war by the instigation of the neighbouring chieftains, he readily submitted to the domination of the Spaniards. Manicaotex, the brother of Caonabo, was also obliged to sue for peace, and being the prime mover of the confederacy, the other caciques followed his example. Behechio alone, the cacique of Xaragua, and brother-in-law of Caonabo, made no overtures of submission. His territories lay remote from Isabella, at the western extremity of the island, around the deep bay called the Bight of Leogane, and the long peninsula called Cape Tiburon. They were difficult of access, and had not as yet been visited by the white men. He retired into the bosom of his domains, taking with him his sister, the famous Anacaona, wife of Caonabo, whom he cherished with fraternal affection under her misfortunes, who soon acquired almost equal sway over his subjects with himself, and was destined subsequently to make some figure in the events of the island.

Having been forced to take the field by the confederacy of the caciques, Columbus now asserted the right of a conqueror, and considered how he might turn his conquest to most profit. His constant anxiety was to make wealthy returns to Spain, for the purpose of indemnifying the sovereigns for their great expenses; of meeting the public expectations so extravagantly excited; and above all, of silencing the calumnies of those who he knew had gone home determined to make the most discouraging representations of his discoveries. He endeavoured, therefore, to raise a large and immediate revenue from the island, by imposing heavy tributes on the subjected provinces. In those of the Vega, Cibao, and all the region of the mines, each individual

above the age of fourteen years, was required to pay, every three months, the measure of a Flemish hawk's bell of gold dust\*. The caciques had to pay a much larger amount for their personal tribute. Manicaotex, the brother of Caonabo, was obliged individually to render in, every three months, half a calabash of gold, amounting to one hundred and fifty pesos. On those districts which were distant from the mines, and produced no gold, each individual was required to furnish an arroba (twenty-five pounds) of cotton every three months. Each Indian, on rendering this tribute, received a copper medal as a certificate of payment, which he was to wear suspended round his neck; those who were found without such document, were liable to arrest and punishment.

The taxes and tributes thus imposed bore hard upon the spirit of the natives, accustomed to be but lightly tasked by their caciques; and the caciques themselves found the exactions intolerably grievous. Guarionex, the sovereign of the Royal Vega, represented to Columbus the difficulty he had in complying with the terms of his tribute. His richly fertile plain yielded no gold; and though the mountains on his borders contained mines, and their brooks and torrents washed down gold dust into the sands of the rivers, yet his subjects were not skilled in the art of collecting it. He proffered, therefore, instead of the tribute required, to cultivate with grain a band of country stretching across the island

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\* A hawk's bell, according to Las Casas, (Hist. Ind. L. 1, C. 105,) contained about three castellanos worth of gold dust, equal to five dollars, and in estimating the superior value of gold in those days, equivalent to fifteen dollars of our time. A quantity of gold worth 150 castellanos was equivalent to 798 dollars of the present day.

from sea to sea; enough, says Las Casas, to have furnished all Castile with bread for ten years\*. His offer was rejected. Columbus knew that gold alone would satisfy the avaricious dreams excited in Spain, and ensure the popularity and success of his enterprizes. Seeing, however, the difficulty that many of the Indians had in furnishing the amount of gold dust required of them, he lowered the demand to the measure of one half of a hawk's bell. It is a curious circumstance, and might furnish some poetical conceits, that the miseries of the poor natives should thus be measured out, as it were, by the very baubles which first fascinated them.

To enforce the payment of these tributes, and to maintain the subjection of the island, Columbus put the fortress already built in a strong state of defence, and erected others. Beside those of Isabella, and of St. Thomas, in the mountains of Cibao, there were now the fortress of Magdalena, in the Royal Vega, three or four leagues from the place where the town of Santiago was afterwards built; another called Catalina, the site of which is forgotten; another called Esperanza, on the banks of the river Yagui in Cibao; but the most important of those recently erected was fort Conception, in one of the most fruitful and beautiful parts of the Vega, about fifteen leagues to the east of Magdalena, controlling the extensive and populous domains of Guarionext.

In this way was the yoke of servitude fixed upon the island, and its thralldom effectually ensured. Deep despair now fell upon the natives when they found a perpetual task inflicted upon them, enforced at stated and frequently recurring periods. Weak and indolent by nature, unused to la-

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\* Las Casas, H. Ind. L. 1, C. 105.

† Idem, ubi sup. C. 110.

bour of any kind, and brought up in the untasked idleness of their soft climate, and their fruitful groves, death itself seemed preferable to a life of toil and anxiety. They saw no end to this harassing evil, which had so suddenly fallen upon them, no escape from its all-pervading influence, no prospect of return to that roving independence and ample leisure, so dear to the wild inhabitant of the forest. The pleasant life of the island was at an end; the dream in the shade by day, the slumber during the sultry noontide heat by the fountain or the stream, or under the spreading palm-tree; and the song, the dance, and the game, in the mellow evening, when summoned to their simple amusements by the rude Indian drum. They were now obliged to grope, day by day, with bending body and anxious eye, along the borders of their rivers, sifting the sands for the grains of gold which every day grew more scanty; or to labour in their fields, beneath the fervour of a tropical sun, to raise food for their taskmasters, or to produce the vegetable tribute imposed upon them. They sunk to sleep weary and exhausted at night, with the certainty that the next day was but to be a repetition of the same toil and suffering. Or if they occasionally indulged in their national dances, the ballads to which they kept time were of a melancholy and plaintive character. They spoke of the times that were past, before the white men had introduced sorrow and slavery and weary labour among them; and they rehearsed pretended prophecies, handed down from their ancestors, foretelling the invasion of the Spaniards; that strangers should come into their island, clothed in apparel, with swords capable of cleaving a man asunder at a blow, under whose yoke their posterity should be subdued. These ballads or areytos they sang with



mournful tunes and doleful voices, bewailing the loss of their liberty, and their painful servitude\*.

They had flattered themselves, for a time, that the visit of the strangers would be but temporary, and that, spreading their ample sails, their ships would once more bear them back to their home in the sky. In their simplicity they had repeatedly inquired when they intended to return to Turey or the heavens. They now beheld them taking root, as it were, in the island. They beheld their vessels lying idly and rotting in the harbour, while the crews, scattered about the country, were building habitations and fortresses, the solid construction of which, unlike their own slight cabins, gave evidence of permanent residencet.

Finding how vain was all attempt to deliver themselves by warlike means from these invincible intruders, they now concerted a forlorn and desperate mode of annoyance. They perceived that the settlement suffered greatly from shortness of provisions, and depended, in a considerable degree, upon the supplies furnished by the natives. The fortresses in the interior, also, and the Spaniards quartered in the villages, looked almost entirely to them for subsistence. They agreed, therefore, among themselves, not to cultivate the fruits, the roots, and maize, which formed their chief articles of food, and to destroy those already growing; hoping that thus, by producing a famine, they might starve the strangers from the island. They little knew, observes Las Casas, one of the characteristics of the Spaniards; who, the more hungry they are, the more inflexible they become, and the more

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\* Peter Martyr, Decad. 3, Lib. 9.

† Las Casas, Hist. Ind. L. 1, C. 106.

hardened to endure suffering\*. They carried their plan generally into effect, abandoning their habitations, laying waste the produce of their fields and groves, and retiring to the mountains, where there were roots and herbs on which they could subsist, and abundance of those kind of rabbits called *utias*. This measure did indeed produce much distress among the Spaniards; but they had foreign resources, and were enabled to endure it by husbanding the partial supplies brought by their ships; the most disastrous effects fell upon the natives themselves. The Spaniards stationed in the various fortresses, finding that there was not only no hope of tribute, but a danger of famine, from this wanton waste and sudden desertion, pursued the natives to their retreats, to compel them to return to labour. The Indians took refuge in the most sterile and dreary heights; flying from one wild retreat to another, the women with their children in their arms or at their backs, and all worn out with fatigue and hunger, and harassed by perpetual alarms. In every noise of the forest or the mountain they fancied they heard the sound of their pursuers; they hid themselves in damp and dismal caverns, or in the rocky banks and margins of the torrents; and, not daring to hunt, or fish, or even to venture forth in quest of nourishing roots and vegetables, they had to satisfy their raging hunger with unwholesome articles of diet. In this way many thousands of them perished miserably, through famine, fatigue, terror, and various contagious maladies engendered by their sufferings. All spirit of opposition was at length completely quelled.

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\* No conociendo la propiedad de los Españoles, los cuales cuanto mas hambrientos, tanto mayor teson tienen y mas duros son de sufrir y para sufrir. Las Casas, Hist. Ind. L. 1, C. 106.

The surviving Indians returned in despair to their habitations, and submitted humbly to the yoke. So deep an awe did they conceive of their conquerors, that it is said a Spaniard might go singly and securely all over the island, and the natives would even transport him from place to place on their shoulders\*.

Before passing on to other events, it may be proper here to notice the fate of Guacanagari, as he makes no further appearance in the course of this history. His friendship for the Spaniards had severed him from his countrymen, but it did not exonerate him from the general woes of the island. His territories, like those of the other caciques, were subjected to a tribute, which his people, with the common repugnance to labour, found it difficult to pay. Columbus, who knew his worth, and could have protected him, was long absent, either in the interior of the island, or detained in Europe by his own wrongs. In the interval, the Spaniards forgot the hospitality and services of Guacanagari, and his tribute was harshly exacted. He found himself overwhelmed with opprobrium from his countrymen at large, and assailed by the clamours and lamentations of his suffering subjects. The strangers whom he had succoured in distress, and taken as it were to the bosom of his native island, had become its tyrants and oppressors. Care, and toil, and poverty, and high-handed violence, had spread their curses over the land, and he felt as if he had invoked them on his race. Unable to bear the hostilities of his fellow caciques, the woes of his subjects, and the extortions of his ungrateful allies, he took

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\* Las Casas, Hist. Ind. L. 1, C. 106. Hist. del Almirante, Cap. 60

refuge at last in the mountains, where he died obscurely and in misery\*.

An attempt has been made by Oviedo to blacken the character of this Indian prince ; it is not for Spaniards, however, to excuse their own ingratitude by casting a stigma upon his name. He appears to have always manifested towards them that true friendship which shines brightest in the dark days of adversity. He might have played a nobler part, in making a stand with his brother caciques, to drive these intruders from his native soil ; but he appears to have been fascinated by his admiration of the strangers, and his personal attachment to Columbus. He was bountiful, hospitable, affectionate, and kind-hearted : competent to rule a gentle and unwarlike people in the happier days of the island, but unfitted, through the softness of his nature, for the stern turmoil which followed the arrival of the white men.

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\* Charlevoix, *Hist. St. Doming.* L. 2.

## CHAPTER VIII.

INTRIGUES AGAINST COLUMBUS IN THE COURT OF SPAIN—  
AGUADO SENT TO INVESTIGATE THE AFFAIRS OF HIS-  
PANIOLA.

1495. WHILE Columbus was endeavouring to remedy the evils produced by the misconduct of Margarite and his followers, that recreant commander, and his politic coadjutor, father Boil, were busily undermining his standing in the court of Castile. They accused him of deceiving the sovereigns and the public, by extravagant descriptions of the countries he had discovered; they pronounced the island of Hispaniola a source of expense rather than profit; and they drew a dismal picture of the sufferings of the colony, occasioned, as they said, by the oppressions of Columbus and his brothers. They charged him with tasking the community with excessive labour during a time of general sickness and debility; with stopping the rations of individuals on the most trifling pretext, to the great detriment of their healths; with wantonly inflicting severe corporal punishments on the common people; and with heaping indignities on Spanish gentlemen of rank. They said nothing, however, of the exigencies which had called for unusual toils; nor of the idleness and profligacy of the commonalty, which required coercion and chastisement; nor of the seditious

cabals of the Spanish cavaliers, who had been treated with indulgence rather than severity. In addition to these complaints, they represented the state of confusion of the island in consequence of the absence of the admiral, and the uncertainty which prevailed concerning his fate; intimating the probability of his having perished in his foolhardy attempts to explore unknown seas, and discover unprofitable lands.

These prejudiced and exaggerated representations derived much weight from the official standing of Margarite and father Boil. They were supported by the testimony of many individuals; the discontented and factious idlers of the colony, who had returned with them to Spain. Some of these had connexions of rank, who were ready to resent, with Spanish haughtiness, what they considered the arrogant assumptions of an ignoble foreigner. Thus the popularity of Columbus received a vital blow, and immediately began to decline. The confidence of the sovereigns also was impaired, and precautions were adopted which savour strongly of the cautious and suspicious policy of Ferdinand.

It was determined to send some person of trust and confidence, who should take upon himself the government of the island, in case of the continued absence of the admiral; and who, even in case of his return, should inquire into the alleged evils and abuses, and remedy such as should appear to be really existant. The person proposed for this delicate office, was Diego Carillo, a commander of a military order; but as he could not get ready to sail in certain caravels about to depart with supplies, the sovereigns wrote to Fonseca, the superintendant of India affairs, to send some trusty person with the vessels, to take charge of the provisions with which they were freighted. These he was to dis-

tribute among the colonists, under the supervision of the admiral; or, in case of his absence, in presence of those in authority. He was also to collect information concerning the manner in which the island had been governed; the conduct of persons in office; the causes and authors of existing abuses; and the measures by which they were to be remedied. Having collected such information, he was to return and make report to the sovereigns; but in case he should find the admiral at the island, every thing was to remain subject to his control.

There was another measure adopted by the sovereigns about this time, which likewise shows the declining favour of Columbus. On the 10th of April, 1495, a proclamation was issued, giving general permission to native-born subjects to settle in the island of Hispaniola, and to go on private voyages of discovery and traffic to the new world. This was granted, subject to certain conditions.

All vessels were to sail exclusively from the port of Cadiz, and under the inspection of officers appointed by the crown. Those who embarked for Hispaniola without pay, and at their own expense, were to have lands assigned them, and provisions for one year, with a right to retain such lands, and all houses they might erect upon them. Of all gold which they might collect, they were to retain one third for themselves, and pay the remaining two thirds to the crown. Of all other articles of merchandise, the produce of the island, they were to pay merely one tenth to the crown. Their purchases were to be made in presence of officers appointed by the sovereigns, and the royal dues paid into the hands of the king's receiver.

Each ship sailing on private enterprize, was to take one or two persons to be named by the royal officers at Cadiz.

One tenth of the tonnage of the ship was to be at the service of the crown free of charge. One tenth of whatever such ships should procure in the newly discovered countries was to be paid to the crown on their return. These regulations included private ships trading to Hispaniola with provisions.

For every vessel thus fitted out on private adventure, Columbus, in consideration of his privilege of an eighth of tonnage, was to have the right to freight one on his own account.

This general license for voyages of discovery was made in consequence of the earnest applications of Vincent Yañez Pinzon, and other able and intrepid navigators, most of whom had sailed with Columbus. They offered to make voyages at their own cost and hazard. The offer was tempting, and well timed. The government was poor, the expeditions of Columbus were expensive, yet their object was too important to be neglected. Here was an opportunity of attaining all the ends proposed, not merely without expense, but with a certainty of gain. The permission, therefore, was granted without consulting the opinion or the wishes of the admiral. It was loudly complained of by him, as an infringement of his privileges, and as disturbing the career of regular and well organized discovery, by the licentious, and in a manner, predatory enterprizes of reckless adventurers. Doubtless much of the odium that has attached itself to the Spanish discoveries in the new world, has arisen from the grasping avidity of private individuals.

Just at this juncture, in the early part of April, while the interests of Columbus were in such a critical position, the ships commanded by Torres arrived in Spain. They brought intelligence of the safe return of the admiral to Hispaniola,



from his voyage along the southern coast of Cuba, with the evidence which he had collected, to prove that it was the extremity of the Asiatic continent, and that he had penetrated to the borders of the wealthiest countries of the east. Specimens were likewise brought of the gold, and the various animal and vegetable curiosities, which he had procured in the course of this voyage. No arrival could have been more timely. It at once removed all doubts respecting his safety, and obviated the necessity of part of the precautionary measures on the point of being taken. The supposed discovery of the rich coast of Asia, also, threw a temporary splendour about his expedition, and again awakened the gratitude of the sovereigns. The effect was immediately apparent in their measures. Instead of leaving it to the discretion of Juan Rodriguez de Fonseca to appoint whom he pleased to the commission of inquiry about to be sent out, they retracted that power, and nominated Juan Aguado.

He was chosen because, on returning from Hispaniola, he had been strongly recommended to royal favour by Columbus. It was intended, therefore, as a mark of delicacy to the latter, to appoint as commissioner a person of whom he had expressed so high an opinion, and who, it was to be presumed, entertained for him a grateful regard.

Fonseca, in virtue of his official station as superintendant of the affairs of the Indias, and probably to gratify his growing animosity for Columbus, had detained a quantity of gold which Don Diego, brother to the admiral, had brought on his own private account. The sovereigns wrote to him repeatedly, ordering him not to demand the gold, or if he had seized it to return it immediately, with satisfactory explanations, and to write to Columbus in terms calculated to soothe any angry feelings which he might have excited. He

was ordered also to consult the persons recently arrived from Hispaniola, in what manner he could yield satisfaction to the admiral, and to act accordingly. Fonseca thus suffered one of the severest humiliations of an arrogant spirit, that of being obliged to make atonement for its arrogance. It quickened, however, the malice which he had conceived against the admiral and his family. Unfortunately, his official situation, and the royal confidence which he enjoyed, gave him opportunities of gratifying it subsequently in a thousand insidious ways.

While the sovereigns thus endeavoured to avoid every thing that might give umbrage to Columbus, they took certain measures to provide for the tranquillity of the colony. In a letter to the admiral, they directed that the number of persons in the settlement should be limited to five hundred; a greater number being considered unnecessary for the service of the island, and a burthensome expense to the crown. To prevent further discontents about provisions, they ordered that the rations of individuals should be dealt out in portions every fifteen days; and that all punishment by short allowance, or the stoppage of rations, should be discontinued, as tending to injure the healths of the colonists, who required every assistance of nourishing diet, to fortify them against the maladies incident to a strange climate.

An able and experienced metallurgist, named Pablo Belvis, was sent out in place of the wrong-headed Fermin Cedo. He was furnished with all the necessary engines and implements for mining, and assaying, and purifying the precious metals, and with liberal pay and privileges. Ecclesiastics were also sent to supply the place of father Boil, and of certain of his brethren, who desired to leave the island. The instruction and conversion of the natives continued to

awaken more and more the generous solicitude of the queen. In the ships of Torres, a large number of Indians arrived, who had been captured in the recent wars with the caciques. Royal orders had been issued that they should be sold as slaves in the markets of Andalusia, as had been the custom with respect to negroes taken on the coast of Africa, and to Moorish prisoners captured in the war with Granada. Isabella, however, had been deeply interested by the accounts given of the gentle and hospitable character of these islanders, and of their great docility. The discovery had been made under her immediate auspices; she looked upon these people as under her peculiar care, and she anticipated with pious enthusiasm the triumph of leading them out of darkness into the path of light. Her compassionate spirit revolted at the idea of treating them as slaves, even though sanctioned by the customs of the times. Within five days after the royal order for the sale, a letter was written by the sovereigns to Bishop Fonseca, suspending that order, until they could inquire into the cause for which the Indians had been made prisoners, and consult learned and pious theologians, whether their sale would be justifiable in the sight of God\*. Much difference of opinion took place among divines on this important question; the queen eventually decided it according to the dictates of her own pure conscience and charitable heart. She ordered that the Indians should be sent back to their native country, and enjoined that the islanders should be conciliated by the gentlest means, instead of being treated with severity. Unfortunately, her orders came too late to Hispaniola to have the desired effect.

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\* Letter of the sovereigns to Fonseca. Navarrete, *Collección de los Viages*, T. 11, Doc. 92.

The scenes of warfare and violence produced by the bad passions of the colonists, and the vengeance of the natives, were not to be forgotten. Mutual distrust and rankling animosity had grown up between them, which no after exertions could eradicate.

## CHAPTER IX.

## ARRIVAL OF AGUADO AT ISABELLA—HIS ARROGANT CONDUCT—TEMPEST IN THE HARBOUR.

1495. JUAN Aguado set sail from Spain towards the end of August, with four caravels, well freighted with supplies of all kinds for the colony. Don Diego Columbus returned in this squadron to Hispaniola. It arrived at Isabella in the month of October, while the admiral was absent, occupied in re-establishing the tranquillity of the interior. Aguado, as has already been shown, was under obligations to Columbus, who had distinguished him from among his companions, and had recommended him to the favour of the sovereigns. He was, however, one of those weak men, whose heads are turned by the least elevation. Puffed up by a little temporary power, he lost sight, not merely of the respect and gratitude due to Columbus, but of the nature and extent of his own commission. Instead of acting as an agent employed to collect information, he assumed a tone of authority, as though the reins of government had been transferred into his hands. He interfered in public affairs; ordered various persons to be arrested; called to account the officers employed by the admiral; and paid no respect to Don Bartholomew Columbus, who remained in command during the absence of his brother. The adelantado, astonished at this presumption, demanded a sight of the commis-

sion under which he acted; but Aguado treated him with great haughtiness, replying that he would show it only to the admiral. On second thoughts, however, lest there should be doubts in the public mind of his right to interfere in the affairs of the colony, he ordered his letter of credence from the sovereigns to be pompously proclaimed by sound of trumpet. It was brief but comprehensive; to the following purport: "Cavaliers, esquires, and other persons who by our orders are in the Indias, we send to you Juan Aguado, our groom of the chambers, who will speak to you on our part. We command you to give him faith and credit."

The report now circulated, that the downfall of Columbus and his family was at hand; and that an auditor had arrived empowered to hear and to redress the grievances of the public. This was originated by Aguado himself, who threw out menaces of rigid investigations and signal punishments. It was a time of jubilee for offenders. Every culprit started up into an accuser; every one who by negligence or crime had incurred the wholesome penalties of the laws, was loud in his clamours against the oppression of Columbus. There were ills enough in the colony; some incident to its situation, others produced by the misdeeds of the colonists: all were ascribed to the maleadministration of the admiral. He was made responsible alike for the evils produced by others, and for his own stern remedies. All the old complaints were reiterated against him and his brothers; and the usual and illiberal cause given for their oppressions, that they were foreigners who sought merely their own interest and aggrandizement, at the expense of the sufferings and the indignities of Spaniards.

Destitute of discrimination to perceive what was true and what false in these complaints, and anxious only to condemn,

Aguado saw in every thing conclusive testimony of the culpability of Columbus. He intimated, and perhaps thought, that the admiral was keeping at a distance from Isabella, through fear of encountering his investigations. In the fulness of his presumption, he even set out with a body of horse to go in quest of him. A vain and weak man in power is prone to have satellites of his own description. The empty and vapouring followers of Aguado, wherever they went, spread rumours among the natives of the might and importance of their chief, and of the punishment he intended to inflict upon Columbus. In a little while, the report circulated through the island, that a new admiral had arrived to administer the government, and that the former one was to be put to death.

The news of the arrival and of the arrogant conduct of Aguado had reached Columbus in the interior of the island; he immediately hastened to Isabella to give him a meeting. Aguado hearing of his approach also returned there. As every one knew the lofty spirit and irascible temper of Columbus, his high sense of his services, and his jealous maintenance of his official dignity, a violent explosion was anticipated at the impending interview. Aguado also expected something of the kind, but, secure in his royal letter of credence, he came fortified with the swelling arrogance of a little mind. The result showed how difficult it is for petty spirits to anticipate the conduct of a man like Columbus in any striking situation. His natural heat and impetuosity had been subdued by a life of trials; he had learned to bring his passions into subjection to his judgment; he had too true an estimate of his own dignity to enter into a contest with a shallow boaster like Aguado; above all, he had a profound reverence for the authority of his sovereigns; for in his enthusi-

astic spirit, prone to deep feelings of reverence, his loyalty was inferior only to his religion. He received Aguado, therefore, with the most grave and punctilious courtesy. He repeated his own ostentatious ceremonial, ordering that the letter of credence should be again proclaimed by sound of trumpet in presence of the populace. He listened to it with solemn deference, and assured Aguado of his readiness to acquiesce in whatever might be the pleasure of his sovereigns.

This unexpected moderation, while it astonished the beholders, foiled and disappointed Aguado. He had come prepared for a scene of altercation, and had hoped that Columbus, in the heat and impatience of the moment, would have said or done something that might have been construed into a disrespect for the authority of the sovereigns. He endeavoured, in fact, some months afterwards, to procure from the public notaries present, a prejudiced statement of the interview; but the deference of the admiral for the royal letter of credence, had been too marked to be disputed, and all the testimonials were highly in his favour\*.

Aguado continued to intermeddle in public affairs, and the respect and forbearance with which he was uniformly treated by Columbus, and the mildness of the latter in all his measures to appease the discontents of the colony, were regarded as proofs of the cowering of his spirit. He was looked upon as a declining man, and Aguado hailed as the lord of the ascendant. Every dastard spirit who had any lurking ill will, any real or imaginary cause of complaint, now hastened to give it utterance; perceiving that in gratifying his malice, he was promoting his interest, and that in vilifying the admiral he was gaining the friendship of Aguado.

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\* Herrera, Hist. Ind. Decad. 1, L. 2, C. 18.



The poor Indians too, harassed by the domination of the white men, rejoiced in the prospect of a change of rulers, vainly hoping that it might produce a mitigation of their sufferings. Many of the caciques who had promised allegiance to the admiral, after their defeat in the Vega, now assembled at the house of Manicaotex, the brother of Caonabo, near the river Yagui, where they joined in a formal complaint against Columbus, whom they considered the cause of all the evils which had sprung from the disobedience and the vices of his followers.

1496. Aguado now considered the great object of his mission fulfilled. He had collected information sufficient, as he thought, to ensure the ruin of the admiral and his brothers, and prepared to return to Spain. Columbus resolved to do the same. He felt that it was time to appear at court, and dispel the cloud of calumny that was gathering against him. He had active enemies of standing and influence, who were seeking every occasion to throw discredit upon himself and his enterprizes. Stranger and foreigner as he was, he had no active friends at court to oppose their machinations. He feared that they might eventually produce an effect upon the royal mind, fatal to the progress of discovery. He was anxious to return, therefore, and explain the real causes of the repeated disappointments with respect to profits anticipated from his enterprizes. It is not one of the least singular traits in his history, that after having been so many years in persuading mankind that there was a new world to be discovered, he had almost equal trouble in proving to them the advantages of its discovery.

When the ships were ready to depart, a terrible storm swept the island. It was one of those awful whirlwinds which occasionally rage within the tropics, and which were

called by the Indians furicanes, or uricans, a name which they still retain with trifling variation. About mid-day a furious wind sprang up from the east, driving before it great masses of clouds, spreading for the space of ten miles. Encountering another tempest of wind from the west, it appeared as if a violent conflict ensued; the clouds seemed rent asunder, with great peals of thunder and incessant lightning. At one time they were piled up high on the sky, at another they were pressed down to the earth, whirling up every thing with them, and filling the air with baleful darkness, worse than the obscurity of midnight. Wherever this whirlwind passed, whole tracts of forest were shivered and stripped of their leaves and branches; those of gigantic size which resisted the blast, were torn up by the roots, and hurled to a great distance. Whole groves were torn from the mountain precipices, with great masses of earth and rock, tumbling into the valleys with terrific noise, and choking the course of rivers. The fearful sounds in the air and on the earth; the pealing thunder, the vivid lightning, the howling of the wind, the crash of falling trees and rocks, filled every one with affright, and many thought that the end of the world was at hand. Some fled to caverns for safety; for their frail houses were blown down, and the air was filled with the trunks and branches of trees, and even with fragments of rocks, carried along by the fury of the tempest. When the hurricane reached the harbour, it whirled the ships round as they lay at anchor, snapped their cables, and sunk three of them to the bottom, with all who were on board. Others were driven about, dashed against each other, and tossed mere wrecks upon the shore by the swelling surges of the sea, which in some places rolled for three and four miles upon the land. The tempest lasted for three hours. When

it had passed away, and the sun again appeared, the Indians regarded each other in mute astonishment and dismay. Never in their memory, nor in the traditions of their ancestors, had their island been visited by such a tremendous tornado. They believed that the deity had sent this fearful ruin to punish the cruelties and crimes of the white men; and declared that this people had moved the very air, the water, and the earth, to disturb their tranquil life, and lay their island desolate\*.

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\* Ramusio, T. 3, p. 7. Peter Martyr, Decad. 1, Lib. 4.

## CHAPTER X.

## DISCOVERY OF THE MINES OF HAYNA.

**1496.** IN the recent hurricane, the four caravels of Aguado were destroyed, together with two others which were in the harbour. The only vessel which survived was the *Niña*, and that in a very shattered condition. Columbus gave orders to have her immediately repaired, and another caravel constructed, out of the wrecks of those which had been destroyed. While waiting until they should be ready for sea, he was cheered by tidings of rich mines in the interior of the island, the discovery of which is attributed to an incident of a somewhat romantic nature\*.

A young Arragonian, named Miguel Diaz, in the service of the adelantado, having a quarrel with another Spaniard, fought with him, and wounded him dangerously. Fearful of the consequences, he fled from the settlement, accompanied by five or six comrades, who had either been engaged in the affray, or were personally attached to him. Wandering about the island, they at length came to an Indian village on the southern coast, near the mouth of the river Ozema, where the city of San Domingo is at present situated. They were received with kindness by the natives, and resided for some time among them. The village was governed by a

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\* Oviedo, *Cronica de las Indias*, Lib. 2, C. 13.

female cacique, who soon conceived a strong attachment for the young Arragonian. Diaz was not insensible to her tenderness; a connexion was formed between them, and they lived for some time very happily together.

The recollection of his country and his friends, began at length to steal upon the thoughts of the young Spaniard. It was a melancholy lot to be exiled from civilized life, and an outcast from among his countrymen. He longed to return to the settlement, but dreaded the punishment that awaited him, from the austere justice of the adelantado. His Indian bride, observing him frequently melancholy and lost in thought, penetrated into the cause with eyes of female affection. Fearful that he would abandon her, and once more return to his countrymen, she endeavoured to devise some means of drawing the Spaniards to that part of the island. Knowing that gold was the great attraction of white men, she informed Diaz of certain rich mines in the neighbourhood. She urged him to persuade his countrymen to abandon the comparatively sterile and unhealthy vicinity of Isabella, and to settle upon the fertile banks of the Ozema, promising that they should be received with the utmost kindness and hospitality by her nation.

Diaz was struck with the suggestion. He made particular inquiries about the mines, and was convinced that they abounded in gold. He noticed the superior fruitfulness and beauty of the country, the excellence of the river, and the security of the harbour at its entrance. He flattered himself that the communication of such valuable intelligence would make his peace at Isabella, and obtain his pardon from the adelantado. Full of these hopes, he procured guides from among the natives, and taking a temporary leave of his Indian bride, set out with his comrades through the wilderness

for the settlement, which was about fifty leagues distant. Arriving there secretly, he learnt, to his great joy, that the man whom he had wounded had recovered. He now presented himself boldly before the adelantado, relying on his tidings for forgiveness. He was not mistaken. No news could have come more opportunely. The admiral had been anxious to remove the settlement to a more healthy and advantageous situation. He was desirous, also, of carrying home some conclusive proof of the riches of the island, as the most effectual means of silencing the cavils of his enemies. If the representations of Miguel Diaz were correct, here was a means of effecting both those purposes. Measures were immediately taken to ascertain the truth. The adelantado set forth in person to visit the river Ozema, accompanied by Miguel Diaz, Francisco de Garay, and the Indian guides, and attended by a number of men well armed. They proceeded from Isabella to Magdalena, from thence across the Royal Vega to the fortress of Conception. Continuing on to the south, they came to a range of mountains, which they traversed by a defile two leagues in length, and descended into another beautiful plain, which was called Bonaio. From hence, proceeding for some distance, they came to a great river called Hayna, running through a fertile country, all the streams of which abounded in gold. On the western bank of this river, and about eight leagues from its mouth, they found gold in greater quantities, and in larger particles, than had yet been met with in any part of the island, not even excepting the province of Cibao. They made experiments in various places within the compass of six miles, and always with success. The soil seemed to be generally impregnated with that metal, so that a common labourer, with little trouble, might find the amount of three

drachms in the course of a day\*. In several instances they observed deep excavations in the form of pits, which looked as if the mines had been worked in ancient times; a circumstance which caused much speculation among the Spaniards, the natives having no idea of mining, but contenting themselves with the particles found on the surface of the soil, or in the beds of the rivers.

The Indians of the neighbourhood received the white men with their promised friendship; and in every respect the representations of Miguel Diaz were fully justified. He was not only pardoned, but received into great favour, and was subsequently employed in various capacities in the island, in all which he acquitted himself with great fidelity. He kept his faith with his Indian bride, by whom, according to Oviedo, he had two children. Charlevoix supposes that they were regularly married, as the female cacique appears to have been baptized, being always mentioned by the Christian name of Catalinat†.

When the adelantado returned with this favourable report, and with the specimens of ore which he had collected, the anxious heart of the admiral was greatly elated. He gave orders that a fortress should be immediately erected on the banks of the Hayna, in the vicinity of the mines, and that they should be diligently worked. The fancied traces of ancient excavations gave rise to one of his usual veins of golden conjectures. He had already surmised that Hispaniola might be the ancient Ophir. He now flattered him-

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\* Herrera, Hist. Ind. Decad. 1, L. 2, C. 18. P. Martyr, D. 1, L. 4.

† Oviedo, Cronica de las Ind. L. 2, C. 13. Charlevoix, Hist. St. Doming. L. 2, p. 146.

self that he had discovered the identical mines, from whence king Solomon had procured his great supplies of gold for the building of the temple of Jerusalem. He supposed that his ships must have sailed by the gulf of Persia, and round Trapoban, to this island\*, which, according to his idea, lay opposite to the extreme end of Asia; for such he firmly believed the island of Cuba.

It is probable that Columbus gave free license to his imagination in these conjectures; which tended to throw a splendour about his enterprizes, and to revive the languishing interest of the public. Granting, however, the correctness of his opinion, that he was in the vicinity of Asia, an error by no means surprising in the imperfect state of geographical knowledge, all his consequent suppositions were far from extravagant. The ancient Ophir was believed to lie somewhere in the east; but its situation was a matter of controversy among the learned, and remains one of those conjectural questions, about which too much has been written for it ever to be incontestibly decided.

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\* P. Martyr, Decad. 1, L. 4.





# **LIFE AND VOYAGES**

OF

## **CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS.**

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### **BOOK IX.**

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#### **CHAPTER I.**

##### **RETURN OF COLUMBUS TO SPAIN WITH AGUADO.**

**1496.** THE new caravel, the Santa Cruz, being finished, and the Niña repaired, Columbus made every arrangement for immediate departure, anxious to be freed from the growing arrogance of Aguado, and to relieve the colony from a crew of factious and discontented men. He appointed his brother Don Bartholomew to the command of the island, with the title which he had already given him of adelantado; in case of his death he was to be succeeded by his brother Don Diego.

On the 10th of March the two caravels set sail for Spain; in one of which embarked Columbus, and in the other Aguado. In consequence of the orders of the sovereigns, all those who could be spared from the island, and some who had wives and relatives in Spain, whom they wished to visit,

returned in these caravels, which were crowded with two hundred and twenty-five passengers; the sick, the idle, the profligate, and factious of the colony. Never did a more miserable and disappointed crew return from a land of promise.

There were thirty Indians also on board of the caravels, among whom were the once redoubtable cacique Caonabo, one of his brothers, and a nephew. The curate of los Palacios observes that Columbus had promised the cacique and his brother to restore them to their country and their power, after he had taken them to visit the king and queen of Castile\*. It is probable that he hoped, by a display of the wonders of Spain, and the grandeur and might of its sovereigns, and by a course of kind treatment, to conquer their enmity to the Spaniards, and convert them into important instruments towards obtaining a secure and peaceable dominion over the island. Caonabo, however, had one of those proud natures, of wild but vigorous growth, which are never to be tamed. He remained a moody and dejected captive. He had too much intelligence not to perceive that his power was for ever blasted; but he retained his haughtiness even in the midst of his despair.

Being as yet but little experienced in the navigation of those seas, Columbus, instead of working up to the northward, so as to fall in with the tract of westerly winds, took an easterly course on leaving the island. The consequence was, that almost the whole of his voyage was a toilsome and tedious struggle against the trade winds and calms which prevail between the tropics. On the 6th of April, he found himself still in the vicinity of the Caribbee islands, with his

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\* Cura de los Palacios. Cap. 131.

crews fatigued and sickly, and his provisions rapidly diminishing. He bore away to the southward, therefore, to touch at the most important of those islands, in search of supplies.

On Saturday, the 9th, he anchored at Marigalante, from whence, on the following day, he made sail for Guadaloupe. It was contrary to the custom of Columbus to weigh anchor on Sunday, when in port; but the people murmured, and observed that when in quest of food it was no time to stand on scruples as to holy-days\*.

Anchoring off the island of Guadaloupe, the boat was sent on shore well armed, to guard against any assault of these warlike people. Before it could reach the land, a large number of resolute females issued from the woods, armed with bows and arrows, and decorated with tufts of feathers, preparing to oppose any descent upon their shores. As the sea was somewhat rough, and a surf broke upon the beach, the boats remained at a distance, and two of the Indians from Hispaniola swam to shore. Having explained to these Amazons that the Spaniards only sought provisions, in exchange for which they would give articles of great value, the women referred them to their husbands, who were at the northern end of the island.

As the boats proceeded thither, numbers of the natives were seen on the beach, who manifested great ferocity, shouting and yelling, and discharging flights of arrows, which, however, fell far short in the water. Seeing the boats approach the land, they hid themselves in the adjacent forest, and rushed forth with hideous cries as the Spaniards were landing. A discharge of firearms drove them terrified to the woods and mountains, and the boats met with no further

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\* Hist. del Almirante, Cap. 62.

opposition. Entering the deserted habitations, the Spaniards began to plunder and destroy, contrary to the inviolable injunctions of the admiral. Among other articles found in these houses, were honey and wax, which Herrera supposes had been brought from Terra Firma, as these roving people collected the productions of distant regions in the course of their expeditions. Fernando Columbus mentions likewise that there were hatchets of iron in these houses ; these, however, must have been made of a species of hard and heavy stone, already mentioned, which resembled iron ; or they must have been procured from places which the Spaniards had previously visited ; as it is fully admitted that no iron was in use among the natives prior to the discovery. The sailors also reported that in one of the houses they found the arm of a man roasting on a spit before a fire ; another of those facts repugnant to humanity, and requiring more solid authority to be credited. The sailors had committed wanton devastation in these dwellings, and may have sought a pretext with which to justify their maraudings to the admiral.

While some of the people were employed on shore, getting wood and water, and making cassava bread, Columbus dispatched forty men, well armed, to explore the interior of the island. They returned on the following day, with ten women and three boys whom they had captured. The women were of large and powerful form, yet of great agility. They were naked, and wore their hair long and loose, flowing upon their shoulders. Some decorated their heads with plumes of various colours. Among them was the wife of a cacique, a woman of great strength and a proud spirit. On the approach of the Spaniards, she had fled with an agility which soon left all her pursuers far behind, excepting a native

of the Canary islands, remarkable for swiftness of foot. She would even have escaped from him, but, perceiving that he was alone, and far from his companions, she turned suddenly upon him, seized him with astonishing force, and would have strangled him had not the Spaniards arrived and taken her, entangled like a hawk with her prey. The warlike spirit of these Carib women, and the circumstance of finding them in armed bands, defending their shores during the absence of their husbands, led Columbus repeatedly into the erroneous idea that certain of these islands were inhabited entirely by women. An error for which, as has already been observed, he was prepared by the stories of Marco Polo, concerning an island of Amazons near the coast of Asia.

Having remained several days at the island, and provided three weeks' supply of bread, Columbus prepared to make sail. As Guadaloupe was the most important of the Caribbee islands, and in a manner the portal or entrance to all the rest, he wished to procure the friendship of the inhabitants. He dismissed, therefore, all the prisoners, with many presents to compensate for the spoil and injury which had been done. The female cacique, however, declined to go on shore, preferring to remain and accompany the natives of Hispaniola who were on board, keeping with her also a young daughter. She had conceived a passion for Caona-bo, having found out that he was a native of the Caribbee islands. His character and story, gathered from the other Indians, had won the sympathy and admiration of this intrepid woman\*.

Leaving Guadaloupe on the 20th of April, and keeping in about the twenty-second degree of latitude, the caravels

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\* Hist. del Almirante, Cap. 68.

again worked their way against the whole current of the trade winds, insomuch that on the 20th of May, after a month of great fatigue and toil, they had yet a great part of their voyage to make. The provisions were already so reduced, that Columbus had to put every one on a daily allowance of six ounces of bread and a pint and half of water. As they advanced, the scarcity grew more and more severe, and was rendered more appalling from the uncertainty which prevailed on board the vessels as to their situation. There were several pilots in the caravels; but being chiefly accustomed to the navigation of the Mediterranean, or the Atlantic coasts, they were utterly confounded, and lost all reckoning, when traversing the broad ocean. Every one had a separate opinion, and none heeded the opinion of the admiral. By the beginning of June, there was an absolute famine on board of the ships. In the extremity of their sufferings, while death stared them in the face, it was proposed by some of the Spaniards, as a desperate alternative, that they should kill and eat their Indian prisoners; others suggested that they should throw them into the sea as so many expensive and useless mouths. Nothing but the absolute authority of Columbus prevented this last counsel from being adopted. He represented that the Indians were their fellow beings, some of them Christians like themselves, and all entitled to similar treatment. He exhorted them to a little patience, assuring them that they would soon make land; for that according to his reckoning they were not far from Cape St. Vincent. At this all scoffed; for they believed themselves yet far from their desired haven; some affirming that they were in the English channel, others that they were approaching Galicia. When Columbus, therefore, confident in his opinion, ordered that sail should be taken in at night, lest they should

come upon the land in the dark, there was a general murmur; the men exclaiming that it was better to be cast on shore than to starve at sea. The next morning, however, to their great joy, they came in sight of the very land which Columbus had predicted. From this time, he was regarded by the seamen as almost oracular in matters of navigation, and as darkly learned in the mysteries of the ocean\*.

On the 11th of June, the vessels anchored in the bay of Cadiz, after a weary voyage of about three months. In the course of this voyage, died the unfortunate Caonabo. It is by the mere casual mention of contemporary writers, that we have any notice of this circumstance, which appears to have been passed over as a matter of but little moment. He maintained his haughty nature to the last; for his death is principally ascribed to the morbid melancholy of a proud but broken spirit†. He was an extraordinary character in savage life. From being a simple Carib warrior, he had risen, by his enterprize and courage, to be the most powerful cacique, and the dominant spirit, of the populous island of Hayti. He was the only chieftain that appears to have had sagacity sufficient to foresee the fatal effects of Spanish ascendancy; or military talent to combine any resistance to its inroads. Had his warriors been of his own intrepid na-

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\* Hist. del Almirante, Cap. 63.

† Cura de los Palacios, Cap. 131. Peter Martyr, Decad. 1, Lib. 4.

Some have affirmed that Caonabo perished in one of the caravels which foundered in the harbour of Isabella during the hurricane; but the united testimony of the curate of los Palacios, Peter Martyr, and Fernando Columbus, prove that he sailed with the admiral in his return voyage.



tion, the front of war which he raised, would have been formidable in the extreme. His fate furnishes on a narrow scale a lesson to human greatness. When the Spaniards first arrived on the coast of Hayti, their imaginations were inflamed with rumours of a magnificent prince in the interior, the lord of the golden house, the sovereign of the mines of Cibao, who reigned in splendid state among the mountains; but a short time had elapsed, and he was a naked and dejected prisoner on the deck of one of their caravels, with none but one of his own wild native heroines to sympathize in his misfortunes. All his consequence vanished with his freedom. Scarce any mention is made of him during his captivity; and with innate qualities of a high and heroic nature, he perished with the obscurity of one of the vulgar.

## CHAPTER II.

DECLINE OF THE POPULARITY OF COLUMBUS IN SPAIN  
—HIS RECEPTION BY THE SOVEREIGNS AT BURGOS—  
HE PROPOSES A THIRD VOYAGE.

ENVY and malice had been but too successful in undermining the popularity of Columbus. It is impossible to keep up a state of public excitement for any length of time, even by miracles. The world at first is prompt and lavish in its admiration, but soon grows cool, distrusts its late enthusiasm, and fancies it has been defrauded of what it bestowed with such prodigality. It is then that the caviller, who had been silenced by the general applause, puts in his insidious suggestions, detracts from the merit of the declining favourite, and succeeds in rendering him an object of doubt and censure, if not of downright aversion. In three short years the public had become familiar with the stupendous wonder of a newly discovered world, and was now open to every insinuation derogatory to the fame of the discoverer and his enterprizes.

The circumstances which attended the present arrival of Columbus, were little calculated to diminish the growing prejudices of the populace. When the ships came to discharge the motley crowd of voyagers and adventurers, who had embarked with such sanguine and extravagant expecta-

tions, instead of a joyous crew bounding on shore, flushed with success, and laden with the spoils of the golden Indias, a feeble train of wretched men crawled forth, emaciated by the diseases of the colony and the hardships of the voyage, who carried in their yellow countenances, says an old writer, a mockery of that gold which had been the object of their search, and who had nothing to relate of the new world, but tales of sickness, poverty, and disappointment.

Columbus endeavoured, as much as possible, to counteract these unfavourable appearances, and to revive the languishing enthusiasm of the public. He dwelt upon the importance of his recent discoveries along the coast of Cuba, where, as he supposed, he had arrived nearly to the Aurea Chersonesus of the ancients, and had bordered on some of the richest provinces of Asia; and above all, he boasted of his discovery of the abundant mines on the south side of Hispaniola, which he persuaded himself were those of the ancient Ophir. The public listened to these accounts with sneering incredulity, or if for a moment a little excitement was occasioned, it was quickly destroyed by the gloomy pictures drawn by disappointed adventurers.

On arriving at Cadiz, Columbus found three caravels in the harbour, commanded by Pedro Alonzo Niño, on the point of sailing with supplies for the colony. Nearly a year had elapsed without any relief of the kind; four caravels which had sailed in the preceding January having been lost on the coast of the peninsula\*. Having read the royal letters and dispatches of which Niño was the bearer, and being informed of the wishes of the sovereigns, as well as the state of the public mind, Columbus wrote by this opportuni-

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\* Muñoz, Hist. N. Mundo, L. 6.

ty, urging the adelantado to endeavour, by every means, to bring the island into a peaceful and productive state, appeasing all discontents and commotions, and seizing and sending to Spain all caciques or their subjects, who should be concerned in the deaths of any of the colonists. He recommended the most unremitting diligence in exploring and working the mines recently discovered on the river Hayna, and that a place should be chosen in the neighbourhood, and a seaport founded. Pedro Alonzo Niño set sail with the three caravels on the 17th June.

Tidings of the arrival of Columbus having reached the sovereigns, he received a gracious letter from them, dated at Almazen, 12th July, 1496, congratulating him on his safe return, and inviting him to court, when he should have recovered from the fatigues of the voyage. The kind terms in which this letter was couched, were calculated to reassure the heart of Columbus; who, ever since the mission of the arrogant Aguado, had considered himself out of favour with the sovereigns, and fallen into disgrace. As a proof of the dejection of his spirits, we are told that when he made his appearance this time in Spain, he was clad in an humble garb, resembling in form and colour the habit of a Franciscan monk, simply girded with a cord\*, and that he had suffered his beard to grow like the brethren of that order†. This was probably in fulfilment of some penitential vow which he had made in a moment of danger or despondency; a custom prevalent in those days, and frequently observed by Columbus. It betokened, however, much humility and depression of spirit, and afforded a striking contrast to his appear-

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\* Cura de los Palacios, Cap. 131.

† Oviedo, Lib. 2, Cap. 18.

ance on his former triumphant return. He was doomed, in fact, to yield repeated examples of the reverses to which those are subject, who have once launched from the safe shores of obscurity on the fluctuating waves of popular opinion. However indifferent Columbus might be to his own personal appearance, he was anxious to keep alive the interest in his discoveries, fearing continually that the indifference that was awakening towards them might impede their accomplishment. On his way to Burgos, therefore, where the sovereigns were expected, he made a studious display of the curiosities and treasures which he had brought from the new world. Among these were collars, armlets, anklets, and coronets of gold, the spoils of various caciques, and which were considered as trophies won from barbaric princes of the rich coasts of Asia, or the islands of the Indian seas. It is a proof of the petty standard by which the sublime discovery of Columbus was already estimated, that he had to resort to this management, to dazzle the gross perceptions of the multitude by the mere glare of gold.

He carried with him several Indians also, decorated after their savage fashion, and glittering with ornaments of gold. Among these were the brother and nephew of Caonabo; the former about thirty years of age, the latter only ten. They were brought merely to visit the king and queen, that they might be impressed with an idea of the grandeur and power of the Spanish sovereigns, after which they were to be restored in safety to their country and condition. Whenever they passed through any principal place, Columbus put a collar and massive chain of gold upon the brother of Caonabo, as being cacique of the golden country of Cibao. The curate of los Palacios, who was a friend of Columbus, and who entertained the discoverer and his Indian cap-

tives for several days in his house, says that he had this chain of gold in his hands, and that it weighed six hundred castellanos\*; the worthy curate likewise makes mention of various Indian masks, and images of wood or cotton, wrought with fantastic faces of animals, all of which he supposes were representations of the devil, who he concludes must be the object of adoration of these islanders†.

The reception of Columbus by the sovereigns was different from what he had anticipated; for he was treated with distinguished favour, nor was any mention made, either of the complaints of Margarite and Boil, or the inquest reported by Aguado. However these may have had a transient effect on the minds of the sovereigns, they were too conscious of the great deserts of Columbus, and the extraordinary difficulties of his situation, not to tolerate what they may have considered errors on his part.

Encouraged by the favourable countenance he experienced, and the interest with which the sovereigns listened to his account of his recent voyage along the coast of Cuba, and the discovery of the mines of Hayna, which he failed not to represent as the Ophir of the ancients, Columbus now proposed a further enterprize, by which he promised to make yet more extensive discoveries, and to annex Terra Firma to their dominions; for he supposed Cuba to be but a part of a rich and splendid continent. For this purpose he asked eight ships; two to be dispatched to the island of Hispaniola with supplies, the remaining six to be put under his command for an exploring voyage. The sovereigns readily promised to comply with his request, and were probably sin-

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\* Equivalent to 3,195 dollars of the present time.

† Cura de los Palacios, Cap. 131.

cere in their intention to do so ; but in the performance of their request, Columbus was doomed to meet with intolerable delay ; partly in consequence of the operation of public events, partly in consequence of the intrigues of men in office, the two great influences which are continually diverting and defeating the designs of princes.

The resources of Spain were at this moment tasked to the utmost by the ambition of Ferdinand, who lavished all his revenues upon wars and alliances. While maintaining a contest of deep and artful policy with France, with the ultimate aim of grasping the sceptre of Naples, he was laying the foundation of a wide and powerful connexion, by the marriages of the royal children, who were now maturing in years. At this time was cemented that family alliance which afterwards consolidated such an immense empire under his grandson and successor Charles V.

While a large army was maintained in Italy, under Gonzalvo of Cordova, to assist the king of Naples in recovering his throne, of which he had been suddenly dispossessed by Charles VIII of France ; other armies were required on the frontiers of Spain, menaced with a French invasion. Squadrons also had to be employed for the safeguard of the Mediterranean and Atlantic coasts of Spain, while a magnificent armada of upwards of a hundred ships, having on board twenty thousand persons, many of them of the first nobility, was dispatched to convoy the princess Juana to Flanders, to be married to Philip, archduke of Austria, and to bring back his sister Margarita, the destined bride of Prince Juan.

These widely extended operations, both of war and amity, put all the land and naval forces into requisition. They drained the royal treasury, and engrossed the thoughts of

the sovereigns, obliging them also to journey from point to point of their dominions. With such cares of an immediate and homefelt nature pressing upon their minds, the enterprizes of Columbus were easily neglected or postponed. They had hitherto been sources of expense instead of profit: and there were artful counsellors ever ready to whisper in the royal ear, that they were likely to continue so. What, in the ambitious eyes of Ferdinand, was the acquisition of a number of wild uncultivated and distant islands, to that of the brilliant domain of Naples; or the intercourse with naked and barbaric princes, to that of an alliance with the most potent sovereigns of Christendom? Columbus had the mortification, therefore, to see armies levied, and squadrons employed, in the idle contests about a little point of territory in Europe; and a vast armada of upwards of a hundred sail destined to the ostentatious service of conveying a royal bride, while he vainly solicited a few caravels to prosecute his discovery of a world. At length, in the autumn, six millions of maravedis\* were ordered to be advanced to Columbus for the equipment of his promised squadron. Just as the sum was about to be delivered, a letter was received from Pedro Alonzo Niño, who had arrived at Cadiz with his three caravels, on his return from the island of Hispaniola. Instead of proceeding to court in person, or forwarding the dispatches of the adelantado, he had gone to visit his family at Huelva, and taken the dispatches with him, merely writing in a vaunting style, that he had a great amount of gold on board of his ships†. This was triumphant intelligence; Columbus immediately concluded that

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\* Equivalent to a value of 86,956 dollars of the present day.

† Las Casas, Hist. Ind. Lib. 1, C. 123. MS.



the new mines were in operation, and the treasures of Ophir about to be realized. The letter of Niño, however, was doomed to have a most injurious effect on his concerns. The king at that moment was in immediate want of money to repair the fortress Salza, in Rouissillon, which had been sacked by the French; the six millions of maravedis, about to be advanced to Columbus, were forthwith appropriated to patch up the shattered castle, and an order was given for the amount to be paid out of the gold brought by Niño. It was not until the end of December, when Niño arrived at court and delivered the dispatches of the adelantado, that his boast of gold was discovered to be a mere figure of speech, and that his caravels were, in fact, freighted with Indian prisoners, from the sale of whom the vaunted gold was to arise.

It is difficult to describe the vexatious effects of this absurd hyperbole. The hopes of Columbus of great and immediate profit from the mines were suddenly cast down; the zeal of his few advocates was cooled; an air of empty exaggeration was given to his enterprizes; and his enemies pointed with scorn and ridicule to the wretched cargoes of the caravel, as the boasted treasures of the new world. The reports brought by Niño and his crew, represented the colony as in a disastrous condition, and the dispatches of the adelantado pointed out the importance of immediate supplies; but in proportion as the necessity of the case was urgent, the measure of relief was tardy. All the unfavourable representations that had hitherto been made seemed corroborated, and the invidious cry of "great cost and little gain," was revived by those politicians of petty sagacity and microscopic eye, who, in great undertakings, can clearly discern the immediate expense, without having scope of vision to embrace the future profit.

## CHAPTER III.

PREPARATIONS FOR A THIRD VOYAGE—DISAPPOINTMENTS  
AND DELAYS.

1497. IT was not until the following spring of 1497, that the concerns of Columbus, and of the new world, began to receive serious attention from the sovereigns. The fleet had returned from Flanders with the princess Margarita of Austria. Her nuptials with Prince Juan, the heir apparent, had been celebrated at Burgos, the capital of Old Castile, with extraordinary splendour. All the grandees, the dignitaries, and chivalry of Spain, together with ambassadors from the principal potentates of Christendom, were assembled on the occasion. Burgos was for some time a scene of chivalrous pageant and courtly revel; and the whole kingdom celebrated with great rejoicings this powerful alliance, which seemed to ensure to the Spanish sovereigns a continuance of their extraordinary prosperity.

In the midst of these festivities, Isabella, whose maternal heart had recently been engrossed by the marriages of her children, now that she was relieved from these concerns of a tender and domestic nature, entered into the affairs of the new world, with a spirit that showed she was determined to place them upon a substantial foundation, as well as clearly to define the powers, and reward the services of Columbus.

To her protecting zeal all the provisions in favour of Columbus must be attributed; for the king began to look coldly on him, and the royal counsellors who had most influence in the affairs of the Indias, were his enemies.

Various royal schedules, dated about this time, manifest the generous and considerate disposition of the queen. The rights, privileges, and dignities granted to Columbus at Santa Fé were again confirmed: a tract of land in Hispaniola, fifty leagues in length and twenty-five in breadth, was offered to him, with the title of duke or marquis. This, however, Columbus had the forbearance to decline: he observed that it would only increase the envy which was already so virulent against him, and would cause new misrepresentations, as he should be accused of paying more attention to the settlement and improvement of his own possessions, than of any other part of the island\*.

As the expenses of the expeditions had hitherto far exceeded the returns, Columbus had incurred debt rather than reaped profit from the share he had been permitted to take in them; he was relieved therefore from his obligation to bear an eighth part of the cost of the past enterprises, excepting the sum which he had advanced towards the first voyage; at the same time, however, he was not to claim any share of what had hitherto been brought from the island. For three ensuing years, he was to be allowed an eighth of the gross proceeds of every voyage, and an additional tenth after the costs had been deducted. After the expiration of the three years, the original terms of agreement were to be resumed.

To gratify the honourable ambition of Columbus also, and to perpetuate in his family the distinction gained by his

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\* Las Casas, Hist. Ind. L. 1, Cap. 123.

illustrious deeds, he was allowed the right of establishing a *mayorazgo*, or hereditary succession to his titles and estates. This he shortly after exercised in a solemn testament which he executed in Seville, in the early part of 1498. By this testament he devised his estates to his own male descendants, and on their failure, to the male descendants of his brothers ; and in default of male heirs, to the females of his lineage.

The heir was always to bear the arms of the admiral, to seal with them, to sign with his signature, and in signing never to use any other title than simply "The Admiral," whatever other titles might be given him by the king, and used by him on other occasions. Such was the noble pride with which he valued this title of his real greatness.

In this testament he made ample provision for his brother the *adelantado*, his son Fernando, and his brother Don Diego, which last, he intimates, had a desire to enter into ecclesiastical life. He ordered that a tenth part of the revenues arising from the *mayorazgo* should be devoted to pious and charitable purposes, and in relieving all poor persons of his lineage. He made provision for the giving of marriage portions to the poor females of his family. He ordered that a married person of his line, who had been born in his native city of Genoa, should be maintained there in competence and respectability, by way of keeping a foothold for the family there ; and he commanded whoever should inherit the *mayorazgo*, always to do every thing in his power for the honour, prosperity, and increase of the city of Genoa, provided it should not be contrary to the service of the church, and the interests of the Spanish crown.

Among various other provisions in this will, he solemnly provides for his favourite scheme, the recovery of the holy sepulchre. He orders his son Diego, or whoever else may

inherit his estate, to invest from time to time, as much as he can spare, in stock in the bank of St. George at Genoa, to form a growing fund, with which he is to stand ready at any time to follow and serve the king in the conquest of Jerusalem. Or should the king not undertake such enterprize, then, when the funds have accumulated to sufficient amount, to set on foot a crusade at his own charge and risk, in hopes that, seeing his determination, the sovereigns may be induced either to adopt the undertaking, or to authorize him to pursue it in their name.

Beside this special undertaking for the Catholic faith, he charges his heir that in case there should arise any schism in the church, or any violence that should menace its prosperity, to throw himself at the feet of the pope, and devote his person and property to defend the church from all insult and spoliation. Next to the service of God, he enjoins loyalty to the throne : commanding him at all times to stand ready to serve the sovereigns and their heirs, faithfully and zealously, even to the loss of life and estate. To ensure the constant remembrance of this testament, he orders his heir that before he confesses, he shall give it to his father confessor to read it, and to examine him upon his faithful fulfilment of its conditions.

As Columbus had felt aggrieved by the general license granted in April 1495, to make discoveries in the new world, considering it as interfering with his prerogatives, a royal edict was issued on the 2d of June, 1497, retracting whatever might be prejudicial to his interests, or to the previous grants made him by the crown. "It never was our intention," said the sovereigns in their edict, "to prejudice in any way the said Don Christobal Colon, nor to allow the conventions, privileges, and favours which we have granted him, to

be encroached upon or violated; but on the contrary, in consequence of the services which he has rendered us, we intend to confer still further favours on him." Such, there is every reason to believe, was the sincere intention of the magnanimous Isabella; but the stream of her royal bounty was doomed to be poisoned or perverted by the base channels through which it flowed.

The favour shown to Columbus, was extended likewise to his family. The title and prerogatives of *adelantado*, with which he had invested his brother Bartholomew, had at first awakened the displeasure of the king, who jealously reserved all high dignities of the kind, to be granted exclusively by the crown. By a royal letter, the office was now conferred upon Don Bartholomew, as if through spontaneous favour of the sovereigns; no allusion being made to his having previously enjoyed it.

While all these measures were taken for the immediate gratification of Columbus, others were adopted for the interests of the colony. Permission was granted him to take out three hundred and thirty persons in royal pay, of whom forty were to be esquires, or gentlemen, one hundred foot-soldiers, thirty sailors, thirty ship-boys, twenty miners, fifty husbandmen, ten gardeners, twenty mechanics of various kinds, and thirty females. He was subsequently permitted to increase the number, if he thought proper, to five hundred; but the additional number were to be paid out of the produce and merchandise of the colony. He was likewise authorized to grant lands to all such as were disposed to cultivate vineyards, orchards, sugar plantations, or other rural establishments, on condition that they should remain residents and housekeepers on the island, for four years after such grant; and that all the brazil wood and precious metals which

might be found on their lands should be reserved to the crown.

Nor were the interests of the unhappy natives forgotten by the compassionate heart of Isabella. In spite of the sophisms by which their subjection and servitude were made matters of civil and divine right, and sanctioned by the political prelates of the day, Isabella always consented with the greatest reluctance to the slavery even of those who were taken in open warfare ; while her utmost solicitude was exerted to protect the unoffending part of this helpless and devoted race. She ordered that the greatest care should be taken of their religious instruction, and the greatest leniency shown in collecting the tributes imposed upon them, with all possible indulgence to defalcators. In fact, the injunctions given with respect to the treatment both of Indians and Spaniards, are the only indications in the royal edicts, of any impression having been made by the complaints against Columbus of severity in his government. It was generally recommended by the sovereigns that, whenever the public safety did not require stern measures, there should be manifested a disposition to lenity and easy rule.

When every disposition was thus shown on the part of the crown to dispatch the expedition to the colony, unexpected difficulties arose on the part of the public. The charm was dispelled which, in the preceding voyage, had made every adventurer crowd into the service of Columbus. An odium had been industriously thrown upon his enterprises ; and his new-found world, instead of a region of wealth and wonder, was considered a land of poverty and disaster. There was a difficulty in procuring either ships or men for the voyage. To remedy the first of these deficiencies, one of those arbitrary orders was issued, so opposite to our present

ideas of commercial policy, empowering the officers of the crown to press into the service whatever ships they might judge suitable for the proposed expedition, together with their masters and pilots; and to fix such price for their remuneration, as the officers should deem just and reasonable. To supply the want of voluntary recruits, a measure was adopted at the suggestion of Columbus\*, which shows the desperate alternatives to which he was reduced by the great reaction of public sentiment. This was to commute the sentences of criminals condemned to banishment, to the galleys, or to the mines, into transportation to the new settlements, where they were to labour in the public service without pay. Those whose sentence was banishment for life, to be transported for ten years, those banished for a specific term, to be transported for half that term. A general pardon was published for all malefactors at large, who within a certain time should surrender themselves to the admiral, and embark for the colonies; those who had committed offences meriting death, to serve for two years, those whose misdeeds were of a lighter nature, to serve for one year†. Those only were excepted from this indulgence, who had committed certain specific crimes, such as heresy, lese majesty, treason, coin-ing, murder, &c. This pernicious measure, calculated to poison the population of an infant community at its very source, was a fruitful cause of trouble to Columbus, and misery and detriment to the colony. It has been frequently adopted by various nations, whose superior experience should have taught them better, and has proved the bane of many a rising settlement. It is assuredly as unnatural for a metro-

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\* Las Casas, Hist. Ind. L. 1, Cap. 112. MS.

† Muñoz, L. 6, § 19.



polis to cast forth its crimes and vices upon its colonies, as it would be for a parent wilfully to ingraft his diseases upon his children. In both instances the obligation of nature is vitiated; nor should it be matter of surprise, if the seeds of evil which are thus sown, should bring forth bitter retribution.

Notwithstanding all these violent expedients, there was still a ruinous delay in fitting out the proposed expedition. This is partly accounted for by changes which took place in the persons appointed to superintend the affairs of the Indias. These concerns had for a time been consigned to Antonio de Torres, in whose name, conjointly with that of Columbus, many of the necessary papers had been made out. In consequence of high and unreasonable demands on the part of Torres, he was removed from office, and Juan Rodriguez de Fonseca, bishop of Badajos, reinstated. The papers had therefore to be made out anew, and fresh contracts formed. While these concerns were tardily attended to, the queen was suddenly overwhelmed with affliction by the death of her only son, Prince Juan, whose nuptials had been celebrated with such splendour in the spring. It was the first of a series of domestic calamities which assailed her affectionate heart, and rendered it desolate for the remainder of her days. In the midst of her distress, however, she still thought on Columbus. In consequence of his urgent representations of the misery to which the colony must be reduced, two ships were dispatched, in the beginning of 1498, under the command of Pedro Fernandez Coronel, freighted with supplies. The necessary funds were advanced by the queen herself, out of her private appropriations for the marriage of her daughter Isabella with Emanuel, king of Portugal. An instance of her kind feeling toward Columbus was also evinced

in the time of her affliction : his two sons, Diego and Fernando, had been pages to the deceased prince ; the queen now took them, in the same capacity, into her own service.

With all this zealous disposition on the part of the queen, Columbus still met with the most injurious and discouraging delays, in preparing the six remaining vessels for his voyage. His cold-blooded enemy, Fonseca, having the superintendence of Indian affairs, was enabled to impede and retard all his plans. The various petty officers and agents employed in the concerns of the armament, were many of them dependents and minions of the bishop, and knew that they were gratifying him in annoying Columbus. They looked upon the latter, also, as a man declining in popularity, who might be offended with impunity ; they scrupled not, therefore, to throw all kinds of difficulties in his path, and to treat him occasionally with that arrogance, which petty and ignoble men in place are prone to exercise.

It seems almost incredible at the present day, that such important and glorious enterprizes should have been subject to such despicable molestations. Columbus bore them all with silent, though swelling indignation. He was a stranger in the land he was benefiting ; he felt that the popular tide had turned against him, and that it was necessary to tolerate many present grievances, for the sake of effecting his great purposes. So wearied and disheartened, however, did he become by the impediments artfully thrown in his way, and so disgusted by the prejudices of the fickle public, that he at one time thought of abandoning his discoveries altogether. He was chiefly induced to persevere by his grateful attachment to the queen, and his desire to achieve something that might cheer and animate her under her afflictions\*.

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\* Yo mucho quisiera despedir del negocio si fuera honesta para

At length, after all kinds of irritating delays, the six vessels were fitted for sea, though it was impossible to conquer the popular repugnance to the service sufficiently to enlist the allotted number of men. In addition to the persons in employ already enumerated, a physician, surgeon and apothecary were likewise sent out for the relief of the colony; and several priests to replace father Boil, and certain of his discontented brethren; while a number of musicians were embarked by the admiral, for the purpose of cheering and enlivening the spirits of the colonists.

The insolence which Columbus had suffered from the minions of Fonseca, throughout this long protracted term of preparation, were destined to harass him to the last moment of his sojourn in Spain, and as it were to follow him to the water's edge. Among the worthless hirelings who had annoyed him, the most noisy and presuming was one Ximeno de Briviesca, treasurer or accountant of Fonseca. He was not an old Christian, observes the venerable Las Casas, by which it is to be understood that he was either a Jew, or a Moor, converted to the Catholic faith. He had an impudent front and an unbridled tongue; and, echoing the sentiments of his patron the bishop, had been loud in his abuse of the admiral and his enterprizes. The very day when the squadron was on the point of weighing anchor, Columbus was assailed by the insolence of this Ximeno, either on the shore when about to embark, or on board of his ship, where he had just entered. In the hurry of the moment he had not his usual self-command. His indignation, hitherto

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con mi Reyna; el esfuerzo de nuestro señor y de su Alteza fizo que continuase y por aliviarle algo de los enojos en que a causa de la muerte estaba. Letter of Columb. to the nurse of Prince Juan.

repressed, suddenly burst forth: he struck the despicable minion to the ground, and spurned him repeatedly with his foot, venting in this unguarded paroxysm, the accumulated griefs and vexations which had long festered at his heart\*.

Nothing could demonstrate more strongly what Columbus had previously suffered from the machinations of unworthy men, than this transport of passion, so unusual in his well-governed temper. He deeply regretted it, and in a letter written some time afterwards to the sovereigns, he entreated that it might not be allowed to injure him in their opinion, he being "absent, envied, and a stranger." The apprehensions evinced in this simple but affecting appeal were not ill-founded, for Las Casas attributes the humiliating measures shortly after adopted by the sovereigns towards Columbus, to the unfavourable impression produced by this affair. It had happened near at home, and, as it were, under the very eye of the sovereigns; it spoke, therefore, more quickly to their feelings than more important allegations from a distance. The personal castigation of a public officer, was represented as a flagrant instance of the vindictive temper of Columbus, and a corroboration of the charges of cruelty and oppression sent from the colony. As Ximeno was a creature of the invidious Fonseca, the affair was sure to be represented to the sovereigns in the most odious point of view. Thus the generous intentions of princes, and the exalted services of their subjects, are apt to be defeated by the intervention of cold and crafty men in place. By his implacable hostility to Columbus, and the secret obstructions which he threw in the way of the most illustrious of human enterprizes, Fonseca has ensured perpetuity to his name, coupled with the contempt of every generous mind.

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\* Las Casas, Hist. Ind. L. 1, Cap. 126. MS.



# **LIFE AND VOYAGES**

**OF**

## **CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS.**

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### **BOOK X.**

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#### **CHAPTER I.**

##### **DEPARTURE OF COLUMBUS FROM SPAIN ON HIS THIRD VOYAGE—DISCOVERY OF TRINIDAD.**

**1498.** ON the 30th of May, 1498, Columbus set sail from the port of St. Lucar de Barrameda, with his squadron of six vessels, on his third voyage of discovery. The route he proposed to take was different from that pursued in his former voyages. He intended to depart from the Cape de Verd islands, sailing to the southwest until he should come under the equinoctial line, then to steer directly westward with the favour of the trade winds, until he should arrive at land, or find himself in a parallel of longitude with Hispaniola. Various considerations had induced him to adopt this course. In his preceding voyage, when he coasted the southern side of Cuba, under the belief that it was the continent of Asia, he had observed that it swept off

toward the south. From this circumstance, and from information gathered among the natives of the Caribbee islands, he was induced to believe that a great tract of the main land lay to the south of the countries he had already discovered. King John II of Portugal appears to have entertained a similar idea; as Herrera records an opinion expressed by that monarch, that there was a continent in the southern ocean\*. If this were the case, it was supposed by Columbus, that, in proportion as he approached the equator, and extended his discoveries to climates more and more under the torrid influence of the sun, he should find the productions of nature sublimated by its rays to more perfect and precious qualities. He was strengthened in this belief by a letter written to him at the command of the queen, by one Jayme Ferrer, an eminent and learned lapidary, who in the course of his trading for precious stones and metals had been in the Levant, and in various parts of the east, had conversed with the merchants of the remote parts of Asia and Africa, and the natives of India, Arabia and Ethiopia, and was considered deeply versed in geography generally, but especially on the nature of those countries from whence the valuable merchandise in which he dealt was procured.

In this letter Ferrer assured Columbus that, according to his experience, the rarest objects of commerce, such as gold, precious stones, drugs and spices, were chiefly to be found in the regions about the equinoctial line, where the inhabitants were black, or darkly coloured; and that, until the admiral should arrive among people of such complexions, he did not think he would find those articles in great abundance†.

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\* Herrera, Hist. Ind. Decad. 1, Lib. 3, C. 9.

† Navarrete, Collec. T. 2, Document 68.

Columbus expected to find such people more to the south. He recollected that the natives of Hispaniola had spoken of black men, who had once come to their island from the south and southeast, the heads of whose javelins were of a sort of metal which they called guanin. They had given the admiral specimens of this metal, which, on being assayed in Spain, proved to be a mixture of eighteen parts gold, six silver, and eight copper; a proof of valuable mines in the country from whence they came. Charlevoix conjectures that these black people may have come from the Canaries, or the western coast of Africa, and been driven by tempest to the shores of Hispaniola\*. It is probable, however, that Columbus had been misinformed as to their colour, or had misunderstood his informants. It is difficult to believe that the natives of Africa or the Canaries, could have survived a voyage of such magnitude, in the frail and scantily provided barks they were accustomed to use.

It was to ascertain the truth of all these suppositions, and if correct, to arrive at the favoured and opulent countries about the equator, inhabited by people of similar complexions with those of the Africans under the line, that Columbus in his present voyage to the new world, took a course much further to the south of that which he had hitherto pursued.

Having heard that a French squadron was cruising off cape St. Vincent, he stood to the southwest after leaving St. Lucar, touching at the islands of Porto Santo and Madeira, where he remained a few days taking in wood and water, and other supplies, and then continued his course to the Canary islands. On the 19th of June, he arrived at Gomera, where

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\* Charlevoix, Hist. St. Doming. L. 3. p. 162.



there lay at anchor a French cruiser with two Spanish prizes. On seeing the squadron of Columbus standing into the harbour, the captain of the privateer put to sea in all haste, followed by his prizes; one of which, in the hurry of the moment, left the greater part of her crew on shore, making sail with only four of her armament, and six Spanish prisoners. The admiral at first mistook them for merchant ships, alarmed by his warlike appearance; when informed of the truth, however, he sent three of his ships in pursuit, but they had gained too much distance to be overtaken. The six Spaniards, however, on board of one of the prizes, seeing assistance at hand, rose on their captors; and the admiral's vessels coming up, the prize was retaken, and brought back in triumph to the port. The admiral relinquished the ship to the captain, and gave up the prisoners to the governor of the island, to be exchanged for six Spaniards carried off by the cruiser\*.

Leaving Gomera on the 21st of June, Columbus divided his squadron off the island of Ferro; three of the ships he dispatched direct for Hispaniola, to carry supplies to the colony. One of these ships was commanded by Alonzo Sanchez de Caravajal, native of Baeza, a man of much worth and integrity; the second by Pedro de Arana of Cordova, brother of Doña Beatrix Henriquez, the mother of the admiral's second son, Fernando. He was cousin, also, of the unfortunate officer who commanded the fortress of La Navidad at the time of the massacre. The third was commanded by Juan Antonio Columbus, (or Colombo,) a Genoese, related to the admiral, and a man of much judgment and capacity. These captains were alternately to have the command, and bear the signal light, a week at a time. The

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\* Hist. del Almirante, C. 65.

admiral carefully designated to them their course. When they came in sight of Hispaniola, they were to steer for the south side, for the new port and town, which he supposed to be by this time established in the mouth of the Ozema, according to royal orders sent out by Coronel. With the three remaining vessels, the admiral prosecuted his voyage towards the Cape de Verd islands. The ship in which he sailed was decked, the other two were merchant caravels\*. As he advanced within the tropics, the change of climate, and the close and sultry weather which prevailed, brought on a severe attack of the gout, followed by a violent fever. Notwithstanding his painful illness, however, he enjoyed the full possession of his faculties, and continued to keep his reckoning, and make his observations, with his usual vigilance and minuteness.

On the 27th of June, he arrived among the Cape de Verd islands, which, instead of the freshness and verdure which their name would betoken, presented an aspect of the most cheerless sterility. He remained among these islands but a very few days, being disappointed in his expectation of obtaining goats' flesh for ships' provisions, and cattle for stock for the island of Hispaniola. To procure them would require some delay; in the meantime the health of himself and of his people suffered under the influence of the weather. The atmosphere was loaded with clouds and vapours; neither sun nor star was to be seen; a sultry depressing temperature prevailed; and the livid looks of the inhabitants bore witness to the insalubrity of the climate†.

Leaving the island of Buena Vista on the 5th of July, Columbus stood to the southwest, intending to continue on

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\* P. Martyr, Decad. 1, Lib. 6.

† Hist. del Almirante, Cap. 65.

until he found himself under the equinoctial line. The currents, however, which run to the north and northwest among those islands, impeded his progress, and kept him for two days in sight of the island del Fuego (Fogo.) The volcanic summit of this island, which seen at a distance resembled a church with a lofty steeple, and which was said at times to emit smoke and flames, was the last point discerned of the old world.

Continuing to the southwest, about one hundred and twenty leagues, he found himself, on the 13th of July, according to his observations, in the fifth degree of north latitude. He had entered that region which extends for eight or ten degrees on each side of the line, and is known among seamen by the name of the calm latitudes. The trade winds from the southeast and northeast, meeting in the neighbourhood of the equator, destroy each other, and a profound calmness of the elements is produced. The whole sea is like a mirror, and vessels remain almost motionless, with flapping sails, the crews panting under the heat of a vertical sun, unmitigated by any refreshing breeze. Weeks are sometimes expended in crossing this torpid tract of the ocean.

The weather for some time past had been cloudy and oppressive; but, on the 13th, there was a bright and burning sun. The wind suddenly fell, and a dead sultry calm commenced, which lasted for eight days. The air was like a furnace; the tar melted; the seams of the ships yawned; the salt meat became putrid; the wheat was parched as if with fire; the hoops shrunk from the wine and water casks, some of which leaked and others burst; while the heat in the holds of the vessels was so suffocating, that no one could remain below a sufficient time to prevent the damage that was taking

place. The mariners lost all strength and spirits, and sunk under the oppressive heat. It seemed as if the old fable of the torrid zone was about to be realized; and that they were approaching a fiery region, where it would be impossible to exist. It is true, the heavens were for a great part of the time overcast, and there were drizzling showers; but the atmosphere was close and stifling, and there was that combination of heat and moisture which relaxes all the energies of the human frame.

During this time the admiral suffered extremely from the gout, but, as usual, the activity of his mind, heightened by his anxiety, allowed him no indulgence or repose. He was in an unknown part of the ocean, where every thing depended upon his vigilance and sagacity; and was continually watching the phenomena of the elements, and looking out for signs of land. Finding the heat so intolerable, he altered his course, and steered to the westward, hoping to find a milder temperature further on, even under the same parallel. He had observed in his previous voyages, that after sailing westward a hundred leagues from the Azores, a wonderful change took place in the sea and sky; both becoming serene and bland, and the air temperate and refreshing. He imagined that a peculiar mildness and suavity prevailed over a great tract of ocean, extending from north to south, into which the navigator, sailing from east to west, would suddenly enter, as if crossing a line. The event seemed to justify his theory; for after making their way slowly for some time to the westward, through an ordeal of heats and calms, with a murky stifling atmosphere, the ships all at once emerged into a genial region; a pleasant cooling breeze came creeping over the sea and gently filled their sails, the close and drizzling clouds broke away, the sky became serene

and clear, and the sun shone forth with all its splendour, but no longer with a burning heat.

Columbus had intended, on reaching this temperate tract, to have stood once more to the south and then westward; but he found his ships so damaged by the late parching weather, which had opened their seams and caused them to leak excessively, that it was necessary to seek some convenient harbour as soon as possible, where they might be refitted. Much of the provisions also was spoiled, and the water was nearly exhausted. He kept on therefore directly to the west, trusting, from the flights of birds and other favourable indications, that he should soon arrive at land. Day after day passed away without his expectations being realized. The necessities of his ships became continually more urgent; wherefore, supposing himself in a parallel of longitude with the Caribbee islands, he bore away towards the northward in search of them, intending to touch among them for refreshments and repairs, and then to proceed to Hispaniola\*.

On the 31st of July there was not above one cask of water remaining in each ship, and the admiral experienced great anxiety. About mid-day a mariner named Alonzo Perez being accidentally at the mast-head, beheld the summits of three mountains rising above the horizon. He immediately gave the cry of land, to the great joy of the crew. As the ships drew nearer it was observed that these mountains were joined together at the base. Columbus had determined to consecrate the first land he should behold, by giving it the name of the Trinity. The appearance of these three mountains united into one struck him as a singular and almost mysterious coincidence; with a solemn feeling

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\* Hist del Almirante, Cap. 67.

of devotion, therefore, he gave to this newly discovered island the name of La Trinidad, which it continues to bear at the present day\*.

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\* Hist. del Almirante, ubi sup.

## CHAPTER II.

## VOYAGE THROUGH THE GULF OF PARIA.

1498. SHAPING his course for the island, Columbus approached its eastern extremity, to which he gave the name of Punta de la Galera, from the form of a rock in the sea, which resembled a galley under sail. He had to coast for five leagues along the southern shore before he could find safe anchorage. On the following day, (August 1,) he continued coasting westward, in search of water, and a convenient harbour where the vessels might be careened. He was surprised at the verdure and fertility of the country, having expected to find it more parched and sterile as he approached the equator; whereas he beheld stately groves of palm-trees, and luxuriant forests, which swept down to the seaside, with fountains and running streams beneath their shade. The shores were low and uninhabited, but the country rose in the interior, was cultivated in many places, and enlivened by hamlets and scattered habitations. In a word, the softness and purity of the climate, and the verdure, freshness, and sweetness of the country, appeared to Columbus to equal the delights of early spring in the beautiful province of Valencia, in Spain\*.

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\* Letter of Columbus to the sovereigns, from Hispaniola. Navarrete, Collec. T. 1.

Anchoring at a point to which he gave the name of *Punta de la Playa*, he sent the boats on shore for water. Here, to their great joy, the seamen found an abundant and limpid brook, at which they filled their casks. There was no safe harbour, however, for the vessels, nor could they meet with any of the islanders, though they found traces of their footsteps, and various fishing implements, which they had left behind, in the hurry of their flight. There were tracks also of animals, which the seamen supposed to be goats, but which must have been deer, with which, as it was afterwards ascertained, the island abounded.

While thus coasting the island, on the 1st of August, Columbus beheld land to the south, stretching to the distance of more than twenty leagues. It was that low tract of coast intersected by the numerous branches of the *Oronoco*, but the admiral, supposing it to be an island, gave it the name of *la Isla Santa*; little imagining that he now for the first time beheld that main continent, that *Terra Firma*, which had been the object of his earnest search.

On the 2d of August, he continued on to the southwest point of *Trinidad*, which he called *Point Arenal*. It stretched towards a corresponding point of *Terra Firma*, making a narrow pass, with a high rock in the centre, to which he gave the name of *El Gallo*. Near this pass the ships cast anchor. As they were approaching this place, a large canoe, in which were five and twenty Indians, put off from the shore, and coming within bowshot, paused and hailed the ships, in a language which no one on board understood. Being extremely desirous of obtaining a near view of these people, and of making inquiries concerning their country, Columbus tried to allure them on board, by friendly signs, by the display of looking-glasses, basins of polished



metal, and various glittering trinkets, but all in vain. They remained gazing in mute wonder for above two hours, but with their paddles in their hands, ready to take to flight on the least attempt to approach them. They were near enough, however, for him to have a full view of them. They were all young men, well formed, with long hair, and fairer complexions than the Indians he had hitherto seen. They were naked, excepting bands and fillets of cotton about their heads, and coloured cloths of the same about their loins. They were armed with bows and arrows, the latter feathered and tipped with bone; and they had bucklers, an article of armour which had never before been seen among the inhabitants of the new world.

Having found all other means to attract them ineffectual, Columbus now tried the power of music. He knew the fondness of the Indians for dances performed to the sound of their rude drums, and the chant of their traditional ballads. He ordered something similar to be executed on the deck of his ship, where, while one sang to the beat of the tabor and the sound of other musical instruments; the ship-boys danced after the popular Spanish fashion. No sooner, however, did this symphony strike up, than the Indians, mistaking it for a signal of hostilities, put their bucklers on their arms, seized their bows, and let fly a shower of arrows. This rude salutation was immediately answered by the discharge of a couple of crossbows, which put the auditors to flight, and concluded this singular entertainment.

Though thus shy of the admiral's vessel, they approached one of the caravels without fear or hesitation, and running under the stern, had a parley with the pilot, who gave a cap and mantle to the one who appeared to be the chieftain. He received the presents with great delight, inviting the pilot by

signs to come to land, where he should be well entertained, and receive great presents in return. On his appearing to consent, they went to shore to wait for him. The pilot put off in the boat of the caravel to ask permission of the admiral; but the Indians seeing him go on board of the hostile ship, suspected some treachery, and springing into their canoe, darted away with the swiftness of the wind; nor was any thing more seen of them\*.

The complexion and other physical characteristics of these savages caused much surprise and speculation in the mind of Columbus. Supposing himself in the seventh degree of latitude, though actually in the tenth, he had expected to find the inhabitants similar to the natives of Africa under the same parallel, who were black, ill shaped, and with crisped hair, or rather wool; whereas these Indians were well formed, had long hair, and were even fairer than those more distant from the equator. The climate also, instead of being hotter as he approached the equinoctial, appeared more temperate. He was now in the canicular days, yet the nights and mornings were so cool that it was necessary to use covering as in winter. This is the case in many parts of the torrid zone, especially in calm weather, when there is no wind. Nature, by heavy dews, in the long nights of those latitudes, cools and refreshes the earth after the great heats of the day. Columbus was at first greatly perplexed by these contradictions to the course of nature, as observed in the old world; they were in opposition also to the expectations he had founded on the theory of Ferrer the lapidary;

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\* Hist. del Almirante, Cap. 88. P. Martyr, Decad. 1, L. 6. Las Casas, Hist. Ind. L. 1, C. 139. MS. Letter of Columbus to the Castilian sovereigns, Navarrete, Collec. T. 1.

but they gradually contributed to the formation of a theory which was springing up in his active imagination, and which will presently be shown.

After anchoring at Point Arenal, the crews were permitted to land and refresh themselves among the shady woods and green lawns of the island. There were no runs of water, but by sinking pits in the sand they soon got sufficient to fill the casks. Columbus, however, found his anchorage at this place extremely insecure. A rapid current set from the eastward through the strait formed by the main land and the island of Trinidad, flowing, as he observed, night and day, with as much fury as the Guadalquiver when swollen by floods. In the pass between Point Arenal and its correspondent point, the current being compressed, boiled and raged to such a degree that Columbus thought it was crossed by a reef of rocks and shoals, preventing all entrance, with others extending beyond, over which the waters roared like breakers on a rocky shore. To this pass, from its angry and dangerous appearance, he gave the name of Boca de la Sierpe, (the Mouth of the Serpent.) He thus found himself placed between two difficulties. The continual current from the east seemed to prevent all return, while the rocks which appeared to beset the pass, threatened destruction if he should attempt to proceed. Being on board of his ship, late at night, kept awake by painful illness, and an anxious and watchful spirit, he heard a terrible roaring from the south. On looking out in that direction, he beheld the sea heaped up, as it were, into a great ridge or hill, the height of the ship, covered with foam, and rolling towards him with a tremendous uproar. As this furious surge approached, rendered more terrible in appearance by the obscurity of night, he trembled for the safety of his vessels. His own ship was

suddenly lifted up with violence, to such a height that he dreaded lest it should be overturned, or cast upon the rocks, while another of the ships was borne violently from her anchorage, and exposed to imminent peril. The crews were for a time in great consternation, and feared they should be swallowed up in the commotion of the waters; but this mountainous surge passed on, and gradually subsided, after a violent contest with the counter current of the strait\*. This sudden rush of water, it is supposed, was caused by the swelling of one of the rivers which flow into the gulf of Paria, and which was as yet unknown to Columbus.

Anxious to extricate himself from this dangerous neighbourhood, he sent the boats on the following morning to sound the depth of water at the Boca del Sierpe, and to ascertain whether it was possible for the ships to pass through there to the northward. To his great joy, they returned with a report that there were several fathoms of water, and currents and eddies setting both ways, either to enter or return. A favourable breeze prevailing, he immediately made sail, and passing through the formidable strait in safety, found himself in a tranquil expanse beyond. He was now on the inner side of Trinidad. To his left spread that broad gulf since known by the name of Paria, which he supposed the open sea, but was surprised on tasting it to find the water fresh. He continued to navigate northward towards a mountain at the northwest point of the island, about fourteen leagues from Point Arenal. Here he beheld two lofty capes of land opposite to each other; one on the island of Trini-

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\* Letter of Columbus to the Castilian sovereigns, Navarrete, Collec. T. 1. Herrera, Hist. Ind. Decad. 1, Lib. 3, C. 10. Hist. del Almirante, C. 69.

dad, the other to the west, on the long promontory of Paria, which stretches from the main land and forms the northern side of the gulf, but which Columbus mistook for an island, and gave it the name of Isla de Gracia.

Between these capes there was another pass, which appeared even more dangerous than the Boca del Sierpe, being beset with rocks, among which the compressed current forced its way with roaring turbulence. To this pass Columbus gave the name of Boca del Dragon. Not choosing to encounter its apparent dangers, he turned northward on Sunday, the 5th of August, and steered along the inner side of the supposed island of Gracia, intending to keep on until he came to the end of it, and then to strike northward into the free and open ocean, and shape his course for Hispaniola.

It was a fair and beautiful coast, indented with fine harbours lying close to each other; the country cultivated in many places, in others covered with fruit trees and stately forests, and watered by frequent streams. What greatly astonished Columbus, was still to find the water fresh, and that it grew more and more so the further he proceeded: it being that season of the year when the various rivers which empty themselves into this gulf are swoln by rains, and pour forth such quantities of fresh water, as to conquer the saltness of the ocean. He was also surprised at the smooth placidity of the sea, which appeared as tranquil and safe as one vast harbour, so that there was no need of seeking a port to anchor in.

As yet he had not been able to have any communication with the people of this part of the new world. The shores which he had visited, though occasionally cultivated by the hand of man, were silent and deserted; and, excepting the fugitive party in the canoe at Point Arenal, he had seen

nothing of the natives. He was extremely anxious to meet with some human being that could, as it were, break this silence, and give him some information concerning the country. After sailing several leagues along the coast, therefore, he anchored on Monday, the 6th, at a place where there appeared signs of cultivation, and sent the boats to shore. They found traces of men; fires which they had kindled, the remains of fish which they had cooked, and foot-prints where they had recently passed; there was likewise a roofless house, but not an individual to be seen. The coast was hilly, covered with beautiful and fruitful groves, and abounding with monkeys. Continuing further westward, to where the country was more level, Columbus anchored in a river. Immediately a canoe with three or four Indians came off to the caravel nearest to the shore, the captain of which, pretending a desire to accompany them to land, sprang into their canoe, overturned it, and with the assistance of his seamen, secured the Indians as they were swimming. When they were brought to the admiral, he soon dissipated their alarm by his usual benignity; he gave them beads, hawks' bells, and sugar, and sent them highly gratified to shore, where many of their countrymen were assembled. This kind treatment, as usual, had the most favourable effect. Such of the natives as had canoes, came off to the ships with the fullest confidence. They were tall of stature, finely formed, and free and graceful in their movements. Their hair was long and straight; some wore it cut short, but none of them braided it, as was the custom among the natives of Hispaniola. They were armed with bows, arrows, and targets; the men wore cotton cloths about their heads and loins, beautifully wrought with various colours, so as at a distance to look like silk, but the women were entirely naked. They brought

bread, maize, and other eatables, with different kinds of beverage, some white, made from maize and resembling beer, and others green, of a vinous flavour, and expressed from various fruits. They appeared to judge of every thing by the sense of smell, as others examine objects by the sight or touch. When they approached a boat they smelt to it, and then to the people. In like manner every thing that was given them was appreciated. They set but little value upon beads, but were extravagantly delighted with hawks' bells. Brass also was held in high estimation; they appeared to find something extremely grateful in the smell of it, and called it turey, signifying that it was from the skies\*.

From the Indians Columbus understood that the name of their country was Paria, and that further to the west he would find it more populous. Taking several of them to serve as guides and intermediators, he proceeded eight leagues westward, to a point which he called Aguja, or the Needle. Here he arrived at three o'clock in the morning. When the day dawned, he was ravished with the beauty of the country. It was cultivated in many places, highly populous, and adorned with magnificent vegetation. The habitations of the natives were interspersed among groves laden with fruits and flowers. The grape-vines entwined themselves among the trees, and birds of brilliant plumage fluttered from branch to branch. The air was temperate and bland, and sweetened by the fragrance of flowers and blossoms; and numerous fountains and limpid streams kept up a universal verdure and freshness. Columbus was so much charmed with the beauty and amenity of this favoured part of the coast, that he gave it the name of The Gardens.

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\* Herrera, Hist. Ind. Decad. 1, L. 3, C. 11.

The natives came off in great numbers in canoes, which were superior in construction to those hitherto seen, being very large and light, and having a cabin in the centre for the accommodation of the owner and his family. They invited Columbus, in the name of their king, to come to land. Many of them had collars and burnished plates about their necks, of that inferior kind of gold called by the Indians *guanin*. They said that it came from a high land which they pointed out, at no great distance to the west, but intimated that it was dangerous to go there, either because the inhabitants were cannibals, or the place infested by noxious animals\*. But what suddenly aroused the attention and awakened the cupidity of the Spaniards, was to behold strings of pearls round the arms of some of the natives. They informed Columbus that they were procured on the seacoast on the northern side of Paria, which he still supposed to be an island; and they showed the mother of pearl shells from whence they had been taken.

Anxious to acquire further information, and to procure specimens of these pearls to send to Spain, he dispatched the boats to shore. The moment the Spaniards landed, a multitude of the natives came to the beach to receive them, headed by their principal cacique and his son. They treated them with profound reverence, as beings descended from heaven, and conducted them to a spacious house, the residence of the cacique, where they were banquetted in their simple but hospitable way, with bread and various fruits of excellent flavour, and the different kinds of beverage which

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\* Letter of Columbus to the sovereigns. Navarrete, Collec. T. 1, p. 252.



have been already mentioned. While they were in the house, the men remained together at one end of it, and the women at the other. After they had finished their collation at the house of the cacique, they were taken to that of the son, where a like collation was set before them. These people were remarkably affable, with at the same time a more intrepid and martial air and spirit, than the natives of Cuba and Hispaniola. They were fairer, Columbus observes, than any he had yet seen, though so near to the line, where he had expected to find them of the colour of Ethiopians. Many ornaments of gold were seen among them, but all of an inferior quality; one Indian had a piece of the size of an apple. They had various kinds of domesticated parrots, one of a light green colour, with yellow neck, and the tips of the wings of a bright red; others of the size of domestic fowls, and of a vivid scarlet, excepting some azure feathers in the wings. These they readily gave to the Spaniards; but what the latter most coveted were the pearls, of which they saw many necklaces and bracelets among the Indian women. The latter gladly gave them in exchange for hawks' bells, or any article of brass, and several specimens of fine pearls were procured for the admiral to send to the sovereigns\*.

Nothing could exceed the kindness and amity of this people, heightened as it was by an intelligent demeanour, and a martial frankness. They seemed worthy of the beautiful country they inhabited. It was a cause of great concern both to them and the Spaniards, that they could not

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\* Letter of Columb. Herrera, Hist. Ind. Decad. 1, L. 3, C. 11. Hist. del Almirante, Cap. 70.

understand each others' language. They conversed, however, by signs; mutual good will made their intercourse easy and pleasant, and at the hour of vespers the Spaniards returned on board of their ships, highly gratified with their entertainment.

## CHAPTER III.

CONTINUATION OF THE VOYAGE THROUGH THE GULF OF  
PARIA—RETURN TO HISPANIOLA.

1498. THE quantity of fine pearls found among the natives of Paria, was sufficient to arouse the sanguine anticipations of Columbus. It appeared to corroborate the theory of Ferrer, the learned dealer in gems, that as he approached the equator he would find the most rare and precious productions of nature. His active imagination, with its accustomed quickness, seized upon every surrounding circumstance that appeared to favour his wishes, and putting them together drew from them the most flattering deductions. He had read in Pliny that pearls are generated from drops of dew which fall into the mouths of oysters: if so, what place could be more propitious to their growth and multiplication than the coast of Paria? The dew in these parts was heavy and abundant, and the oysters were so plentiful that they clustered about the roots and pendant branches of the mangrove trees, which grew in the margin of the tranquil sea. When a branch which had drooped for a time in the water was drawn forth, it would be found covered with oysters. Las Casas, noticing this sanguine conclusion of Columbus, observes, that the shell-fish here spoken of are not of the kind which produce pearl; for that those, by a

natural instinct, as if conscious of their precious charge, hide themselves in the deepest water\*.

Still imagining the coast of Paria to be an island, and anxious to circumnavigate it and arrive at the place where these pearls were said by the Indians to abound, Columbus left the Gardens on the 10th of August, and continued coasting westward within the gulf, in search of an outlet to the north. He observed portions of Terra Firma appearing towards the bottom of the gulf, which he supposed to be islands, and called them Isabeta and Tramontana, and fancied that the desired outlet to the sea must lie between them. As he advanced, however, he found the water continually growing shallower and fresher, until he did not dare to venture any further with his ship, which, he observed, was of too great size for expeditions of this kind, being of a hundred tons burthen, and requiring three fathoms of water. He came to anchor, therefore, and sent a light caravel called the *Correo* to ascertain whether there was an outlet to the ocean between the supposed islands. The caravel returned on the following day, reporting that at the western end of the gulf there was an opening of two leagues, which led into an inner and circular gulf, surrounded by four openings, apparently smaller gulfs, or rather mouths of rivers, from which flowed the great quantity of fresh water that sweetened the neighbouring sea. In fact, from one of these mouths issued the great river the *Cuparipari*, or as it is now called, the *Paria*. To this inner and circular gulf Columbus gave the name of the Gulf of Pearls, through a mistaken idea that they abounded in its waters, none, in fact, being found there. He still imagined that the four openings of which the mari-

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\* Las Casas, Hist. Ind. Cap. 136.

ners spoke might be intervals between islands, though they affirmed that all the land he saw was one connected continent\*. As it was impossible to proceed further westward with his ships, he had no alternative but to retrace his course, and seek an exit to the north by the Boca del Dragon. He would gladly have continued for some time to explore this coast, for he considered himself in one of those opulent regions described as the most favoured upon earth, and which must increase in riches towards the equator. Imperious considerations, however, compelled him to shorten his voyage and hasten to St. Domingo. The sea-stores of his ships were almost exhausted, and the various supplies for the colony, with which they were freighted, were in danger of spoiling. He was suffering, also, extremely in his health. Besides the gout, which had rendered him a cripple for the greater part of the voyage, he was afflicted by a complaint in his eyes, caused by fatigue and over-watching, which almost deprived him of sight. Even the voyage along the coast of Cuba, he observes, in which he was thirty and three days almost without sleep, had not so injured his eyes, and disordered his blood, or caused him so much painful suffering as the present†.

On the 11th of August, therefore, he set sail eastward for the Boca del Dragon, and was borne along with great velocity by the currents; which, however, prevented him from landing again at his favourite spot the Gardens. On Sunday the 13th he anchored near to the Boca, in a fine harbour, to which he gave the name of Puerto de Gatos, from a

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\* Hist. del Almirante, Cap. 78.

† Letter of Columbus to the sovereigns. Navarrete, T. 1, p. 252.

species of monkey called gato paulo, with which the neighbourhood abounded. On the borders of the sea he perceived many trees which he mistook for mirabolanes, a fruit only found in the countries of the east. There were great numbers also of mangroves growing within the water, with oysters clinging to their branches, their mouths open, as he supposed, to receive the dew, which was afterwards to be transformed to pearls\*.

On the following morning, the 14th of August, towards noon, the ships approached the Boca del Dragon, and prepared to venture through that formidable pass. The distance from cape Boto at the end of Paria, and cape Lapa, the extremity of Trinidad, is about five leagues; but in the interval there were two islands, which Columbus named Caracol and Delfin. The impetuous body of fresh water which flows through the gulf, particularly in the rainy months of July and August, is straitened at the narrow outlets between these islands, where it makes a turbulent sea, foaming and roaring as if breaking over rocks, and rendering the entrance and exit of the gulf extremely dangerous. The horrors and perils of such places are always tenfold to discoverers, who have no chart, or pilot, or advice of previous voyager to guide them. Columbus at first apprehended sunken rocks and shoals, but on considering the commotion of the strait attentively, he attributed it to the conflict between the prodigious body of fresh water setting through the gulf and struggling for an outlet, and the tide of salt water struggling to enter. The ships had scarcely ventured into the fearful channel, when the wind died away, and they were in danger every moment of being thrown upon the rocks or

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\* Herrera, Hist. Ind. Decad. 1, L. 3, C. 10.

sands. The current of fresh water, however, gained the victory, and carried them safely through. The admiral, when once more safe in the open sea, congratulated himself upon his escape from this perilous strait; which, he observes, might well be called the Mouth of the Dragon\*.

He now stood to the westward, running along the outer coast of Paria, still supposing it an island, and intending to visit the Gulf of Pearls, which he imagined to be at the end of it, opening to the sea. He wished to ascertain whether this great body of fresh water proceeded from rivers, as the crew of the caravel *Correo* had affirmed; for it appeared to him impossible that the streams of mere islands, as he supposed the surrounding land, could furnish such a prodigious quantity.

On leaving the Boca del Dragon, he saw to the northeast, many leagues distant, two islands, which he called Assumption and Conception, probably those now known as Tobago and Granada. In his course along the northern coast of Paria, he saw several other small islands, and many fine harbours, to some of which he gave names, but they have ceased to be known by them. On the 15th he discovered the islands of Margarita and Cubagua, afterwards famous for their pearl fishery. The island of Margarita, about fifteen leagues in length, and six in breadth, was well peopled. The little island of Cubagua, lying between it and the main land, and only about four leagues from the latter, was dry and sterile, without either wood or fresh water, but possessed a good harbour. On approaching this island, the admiral beheld a number of Indians fishing for pearls, who made for the land. A boat being sent to communicate with them, one

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\* Herrera, *Hist. Ind. Decad.* 1, L. 3, C. 11.

of the sailors noticed many strings of pearls round the neck of a female. Having a plate of Valentia ware, a kind of porcelain painted and varnished with gaudy colours, he broke it and presented the pieces to the Indian woman, who gave him in exchange a considerable number of her pearls. These he carried to the admiral, who immediately sent persons on shore, well provided with Valentian plates and hawks' bells, for which in a little time he procured about three pounds' weight of pearls, some of which were of a very large size\*, and were sent by him afterwards to the sovereigns as specimens.

There was great temptation to linger here, and to seek other places, which the Indians mentioned as abounding in pearls. The coast of Paria also continued extending to the westward as far as the eye could reach, rising into a range of mountains, and provoking examination, to ascertain whether, as he began to think, it was a part of the Asiatic continent. Columbus was compelled, however, though with the greatest reluctance, to forego this most interesting investigation. The malady of his eyes had now grown so virulent, that he could no longer take observations, or keep a look out, but had to trust to the reports of the pilots and mariners. He bore away, therefore, for Hispaniola, intending to repose there from the toils of his voyage, and to recruit his health, while he should send his brother, the adelantado, to complete the discovery of this important country. After sailing for five days to the northwest, he made the island of Hispaniola on the 19th of August, fifty leagues to the westward of the river Ozema, the place of his destination, and

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\* Charlevoix, Hist. St. Doming. Lib. 3, p. 169.



anchored on the following morning under the little island of Beata.

He was astonished to find himself so mistaken in his calculations, and so far below his destined port, but attributed it correctly to the force of the current, setting out of the Boca del Dragon ; which, while he had lain to at nights, to avoid running on rocks and shoals, had borne his ships insensibly to the west. This current, which sets across the Caribbean sea, and the continuation of which now bears the name of the Gulf Stream, was so rapid, that on the 15th, when the wind was but moderate, the ships had made seventy-five leagues in four and twenty hours. Columbus attributed to the violence of this current the formation of that pass called the Boca del Dragon, where he supposed it had forced its way through a narrow isthmus that formerly connected Trinidad with the extremity of Paria. He imagined, also, that its constant operation had worn away and inundated the borders of the main land, gradually producing that fringe of islands which stretches from Trinidad to the Lucayos, or Bahamas, and which, according to his idea, had originally been part of the solid continent. In corroboration of this opinion, he notices the form of those islands, being narrow from north to south, and extending in length from east to west, in the direction of the current\*.

The island of Beata, where Columbus had anchored, is about thirty leagues to the west of the river Ozema, where he expected to find the new seaport which his brother had been instructed to found. The strong and steady current from the east, however, and the prevalence of winds from that quarter, might detain him for a long time at the island,

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\* Letter to the king and queen, Navarrete, Collec. T. 1.

and render the remainder of his voyage slow and precarious. He sent a boat on shore, therefore, to procure an Indian messenger to take a letter to his brother the adelantado. Six of the natives came off to the ships, one of whom was armed with a Spanish crossbow. The anxious mind of the admiral was immediately alarmed at seeing a weapon of the kind in the possession of an Indian. It was not an article of traffic, and he feared could only have fallen into his hands by the death of some Spaniard\*. He apprehended that further evils had befallen the settlements during his long absence, and that there had again been troubles with the natives.

Having dispatched his messenger, he again made sail, and arrived off of the mouth of the river on the 30th of August. He was met on the way by a caravel, on board of which was the adelantado, who, having received his letter, had hastened forth, with affectionate ardour, to welcome his arrival. The meeting of the brothers was a cause of mutual joy and consolation; they were strongly attached to each other; each had had his trials and sufferings during their long separation, and each looked with confidence to the other for relief. Don Bartholomew appears to have always had great deference for the soaring genius, the comprehensive mind, and the commanding reputation of his brother; while the latter placed great reliance, in times of difficulty, on the worldly knowledge, the indefatigable activity, and the lion-hearted courage of the adelantado.

Columbus arrived almost the wreck of himself. His voyages were always of a nature to wear out both soul and body; having to navigate amidst unknown dangers, and to

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\* Las Casas, Hist. Ind. L. 1, C. 148.

keep anxious watch at all hours and in all weathers. As age and infirmity increased upon him, these trials became the more severe. His constitution must originally have been wonderfully vigorous, but a powerful constitution, exposed to too great hardships at an advanced period of life, breaks up into violent aches and maladies. In this last voyage he had been parched and consumed by fever, racked by gout, and his whole system disordered by incessant watchfulness; he came into port haggard, emaciated, and almost blind. His spirit, however, was as usual superior to all bodily affliction or decay; and he looked forward with magnificent anticipations to the result of his recent discoveries, which he intended should be immediately prosecuted by his hardy and enterprising brother.

## CHAPTER IV.

SPECULATIONS OF COLUMBUS CONCERNING THE COAST  
OF PARIA.

1498. THE natural phenomena of a great and striking nature, which presented themselves in the course of this voyage, had powerfully exercised the contemplative mind of Columbus. In considering the vast body of fresh water which flows into the gulf of Paria, and thence rushes with such force into the ocean, he formed one of his simple and grand conclusions. It could not be produced by an island, or by islands ; it must be some mighty river which had wandered through a great extent of country, collecting all its streams, and pouring them in one vast current into the ocean. The land, therefore, which furnished such a river, must be a continent. He now supposed that the various tracts of land which he had beheld about this gulf, were mostly connected together. That the coast of Paria extended far to the west, beyond a chain of mountains which he had beheld afar off from Margarita ; and that the land opposite to Trinidad, instead of being an island, continued to an immense distance to the south, far beyond the equator, into that hemisphere hitherto unknown to civilized man. He considered all this an extension of the Asiatic continent, thus presuming that the greater part of the surface of the globe was firm land. In

this last opinion he found himself supported by authors of the highest name, both ancient and modern ; among whom he cites Aristotle and Seneca, St. Augustine and the cardinal Pedro de Aliaco, to whose writings he always attached great value. He lays particular stress also on the assertion of Esdras in his fourth book, that, of seven parts of the world six are dry land, and one part only is covered with water.

The land, therefore, surrounding the gulf of Paria, was but the border of an almost boundless continent, stretching far to the west and to the south, including the most precious regions of the earth, lying under the most auspicious stars and benignant skies ; but as yet unknown and uncivilized, free to be discovered and appropriated by any Christian nation. "May it please our Lord," he exclaims in his letter to the sovereigns, "to give long life and health and leisure to your highnesses, that you may prosecute this so noble enterprize, in which, methinks, God will receive great service, Spain vast increase of grandeur, and all Christians much consolation and delight, since throughout these lands will be divulged the name of our Saviour."

So far the deductions of Columbus, though sanguine, admit of little cavil ; but he carried them still further, until they ended in what may appear to some mere chimerical reveries. In his letter to the sovereigns he stated that in his former voyages, when he steered westward from the Azores, he had observed, after sailing about a hundred leagues, a sudden and great change in the sky and the stars, the temperature of the air, and the calmness of the ocean. It seemed as if a line ran from north to south, beyond which every thing became different. The needle, which had previously inclined toward the northeast, now varied a whole point to the northwest. The sea, hitherto clear, was covered with weeds, so

dense, that in his first voyage he had expected to run aground on shoals. A universal tranquillity reigned throughout the elements, and the climate was mild and genial, whether in summer or winter. On taking his astronomical observations at night, after crossing that imaginary line, the north star appeared to him to describe a diurnal circle in the heavens, of five degrees in diameter.

On his present voyage he had varied his route, and had run southward from the Cape de Verd islands, for the equinoctial line. Before reaching it, however, the heat had become insupportable, and a wind springing up from the east, he had been induced to strike westward when in the parallel of Sierra Leone in Guinea. For several days he had been almost consumed by scorching and stifling heat, under a sultry yet clouded sky, and in a drizzling atmosphere, until he arrived at the ideal line already mentioned, extending from north to south. Here suddenly, to his great relief, he had emerged into serene weather, with a clear blue sky, and and a sweet and temperate atmosphere. The further he had proceeded west, the more pure and genial he had found the climate, the sea tranquil, the breezes soft and balmy. All these phenomena coincided with those he had remarked at the same line, but further north, in his former voyages; excepting that here there was no herbage in the sea, and the movements of the stars were different. The polar star appeared to him here to describe a diurnal circle of ten degrees in diameter, instead of five; an augmentation which had struck him with astonishment, but which, he says, he ascertained by observations taken in different nights, with his quadrant. Its greatest altitude at the former place, in the parallel of the Azores, he had found ten degrees, and in the present place fifteen.

From these and other circumstances, he was inclined to doubt the received theory with respect to the form of the earth. Philosophers had described it as spherical, but they knew nothing of the part of the world which he had discovered. The ancient part, known to them, he had no doubt was spherical; but he now supposed that the real form of the earth was that of a pear, one part much more elevated than the rest, and tapering upwards toward the skies. This part he supposed to be in the interior of this newly found continent, and immediately under the equator. All the phenomena which he had previously noticed, appeared to corroborate this theory. The variations which he had observed in passing the imaginary line running from north to south, he concluded to be by the ships having arrived at this supposed swelling of the earth, where they began gently to mount towards the skies, into a purer and more celestial atmosphere\*. The variation of the needle he ascribed to the same cause, being affected by the coolness and mildness of the climate, varying to the northwest in proportion as the ships continued onward in their ascent†. So, also, the altitude of

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\* Peter Martyr mentions that the admiral told him, that, from the climate of great heat and unwholesome air, he had ascended the back of the sea, as it were ascending a high mountain, towards heaven. Decad. 1, Lib. 6.

† Columbus, in his attempts to account for the variation of the needle, supposed that the north star possessed the quality of the four cardinal points, as did likewise the loadstone. That if the needle were touched with one part of the loadstone, it would point east, with another, west, and so on. Wherefore, he adds, those who prepare or magnetize the needles, cover the loadstone with a cloth, so that the north part only remains out, that is to say, the part which possesses the virtue of causing the needle to point to the north. Hist. del Almirante, C. 66.

the north star, and the circle it described in the heavens, appeared to be greater in consequence of being regarded from a greater elevation, less obliquely; and through a purer medium of atmosphere; and these phenomena would be found to increase the more one approached the equator, from the still increasing eminence of this part of the earth.

He noticed, also, the difference of the climate, vegetation, and people, of this part of the new world, from those under the same parallel in Africa. There the heat was insupportable, the land parched and sterile, the inhabitants were black, with crisped wool, ill-shapen in their forms, and dull and brutal in their natures. Here, on the contrary, although the sun was in Leo, he found the noontide heat moderate, the mornings and evenings fresh and cool, the country green and fruitful, and covered with beautiful forests, the people fairer even than in the lands he had discovered further north, having long hair, with well-proportioned and graceful forms, lively intellects, and courageous spirits. All this, in a latitude so near to the equator, he attributed to the superior altitude of this part of the world, by which it was raised into a more celestial region of the air. On turning northward, through the gulf of Paria, he observed that he had found the circle described by the north star again to diminish. The current of the sea also increased in velocity, wearing away, as has already been remarked, the borders of the continent, and producing the adjacent islands by its incessant operations; which was further confirmation of the idea that one ascends in going southward, and descends in returning northward.

Aristotle had imagined that the highest part of the earth, and nearest to the skies, was under the antarctic pole. Other sages had maintained that it was under the



arctic. Hence it was apparent that both conceived one part of the earth to be more elevated and noble, and nearer to the heavens than the rest. They did not think of this eminence being under the equinoctial line, observes Columbus, because they had no certain knowledge of this hemisphere, but only spoke of it theoretically and from conjecture.

As usual he assisted his theory by holy writ. "The sun, when God made it," he observes, "was in the first point of the orient; or, the first light was there." That place, according to his idea, must be here, in the remotest part of the east, where the ocean and the extreme part of India meet, under the equinoctial line, and where the highest part of the earth is situated.

He supposed this apex of the world, though of immense height, to be neither rugged nor precipitous, but that the land rose to it by gentle and imperceptible degrees. The beautiful and fertile shores of Paria were situated on its remote borders; abounding, of course, with those precious articles which are congenial with the most favoured and excellent climates. As one penetrated into the interior and gradually ascended, the land would be found to increase in beauty and luxuriance, and in the exquisite nature of its productions; until one arrived at the summit under the equator. This he imagined to be the noblest and most perfect place on earth; enjoying from its position an equality of days and nights, and a uniformity of seasons, and being elevated into a serene and heavenly temperature, above the heats and colds, the clouds and vapours, the storms and tempests, which deform and disturb the lower regions. In a word, here he supposed to be situated the original abode of our first parents, the primitive seat of human

innocence and bliss, the Garden of Eden, or terrestrial Paradise!

He imagined this place to be still flourishing in all its blissful delights, but inaccessible to mortal feet, excepting by divine permission, according to the opinion of the most eminent fathers of the church. From this height, he presumed, though of course from a great distance, proceeded this mighty stream of fresh water which filled the gulf of Paria, and sweetened the salt ocean in its vicinity; being supplied by the fountain mentioned in Genesis, as springing from the tree of life in the Garden of Eden.

Such was the singular speculation of Columbus, which he detailed at full length, in a letter to the Castilian sovereigns\*, citing various authorities for his opinions, among which were St. Augustine, St. Isidor, and St. Ambrosius, and fortifying his theory with much of that speculative erudition in which he was deeply versed†. It shows how his ardent mind was heated by the magnificence of his discoveries. Shrewd men, in the coolness and quietude of ordinary life, and in these modern days of cautious and sober fact, may smile at such a reverie; but it was countenanced by the speculations of the most sage and learned of those times; and if it had not been, could we wonder at any sally of the imagination in one placed in the situation of Columbus? He beheld a vast world, rising, as it were, into existence before him; its nature and extent unknown and undefined, as yet a mere region for conjecture. Every day displayed some new feature of beauty and sublimity. Island after island, whose

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\* Navarrete, *Collec. de Viages*, T. 1, p. 242.

† See *Illustrations*, article, "Situation of the Terrestrial Paradise."

rocks he was told were veined with gold, whose groves teemed with spices, or whose shores abounded with pearls. Interminable ranges of coast; promontory beyond promontory, stretching as far as the eye could reach; luxuriant valleys, sweeping away into a vast interior, whose distant mountains, he was told, concealed still happier lands, and realms of still greater opulence. When he looked upon all this region of golden promise, it was with the glorious conviction, that his genius had, in a manner, called it into existence; he regarded it with the triumphant eye of a discoverer. Had not Columbus been capable of these enthusiastic soarings of the imagination, he might, with other sages, have reasoned calmly and coldly about the probability of a continent existing in the west, but he would never have had the daring enterprize to adventure in search of it into the unknown realms of oceans.

Still, in the midst of his fanciful speculations, we find that solid foundation of sagacity which formed the basis of his character. The conclusion which he drew from the great flow of the Orinoco, that it must be the outpouring of a continent, was shrewd and striking. A learned Spanish historian has also ingeniously excused other parts of his theory. "He suspected," observes he, "a certain elevation of the globe at one part of the equator; philosophers have since determined the world to be a spheroid, slightly elevated in its equatorial circumference. He suspected that the diversity of temperatures influenced the needle; not being able to penetrate the cause of its inconstant variations. Successive series of voyages and experiments have made this inconstancy more manifest, and have shown that rigorous cold sometimes divests the needle of all its virtue. Perhaps new observations may justify the surmise of Columbus.

Even his error concerning the circle described by the polar star, which he thought augmented, by an optical illusion, in proportion as the observer approached the equinox, manifests him a philosopher superior to the time in which he lived\*."

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\* Muñoz, Hist. N. Mundo, L. 6, § 32.



# **LIFE AND VOYAGES**

OF

## **CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS.**

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### **BOOK XI.**

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#### **CHAPTER I.**

##### **ADMINISTRATION OF THE ADELANTADO—EXPEDITION TO THE PROVINCE OF XARAGUA.**

**1498.** COLUMBUS had anticipated repose from his toils on arriving at Hispaniola, but a new scene of trouble and anxiety opened upon him, which was destined to impede the prosecution of his enterprizes, and to affect all his future fortunes. To explain this, it is necessary to relate the occurrences of the island in the long space of time, during which he had been so injuriously detained in Spain.

**1496.** When he sailed for Europe in March, 1496, his brother, Don Bartholomew, who remained as governor, with the title of adelantado, took the earliest measures to execute his directions, with respect to the mines recently discovered by Miguel Diaz, on the south side of the island. Leaving Don Diego Columbus in command at Isabella, he

repaired with a large force to the neighbourhood of the mines, and choosing a favourable situation in a place most abounding in ore, he built a fortress, to which he gave the name of St. Christoval. The workmen, however, finding grains of gold among the earth and stone employed in its construction, gave it the name of the Golden Tower\*.

The adelantado remained here three months, superintending the building of the fortress, and making the necessary preparations for working the mines, and purifying the ore. The progress of the work, however, was greatly impeded by scarcity of provisions, having frequently to detach a part of the men from their labours, and to send them about the country in quest of supplies. The old fashioned hospitality of the island was at an end. The Indians no longer gave their provisions freely; they had learnt from the white men to profit by the necessities of the stranger, and to exact a price for the bread that was to relieve his hunger. Their scanty stores also were soon exhausted; for their frugal habits, and their natural indolence and improvidence, seldom permitted them to have more provisions on hand than was requisite for present support. The adelantado found it difficult, therefore, to maintain so large a force in the neighbourhood, until they should have time to cultivate the earth and raise live stock, or should receive supplies from Spain. Leaving ten men to guard the fortress, with a dog to assist them in catching utias, he marched with the rest of his men, about four hundred in number, to fort Conception, in the abundant country of the Vega. Here he passed the whole month of June, collecting the quarterly tribute, being supplied with food by Guarionex and his subordinate caciques†.

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\* P. Martyr, Decad. 1, L. 5.

† Idem.

In the following month, (July, 1496,) the three caravels commanded by Niño arrived from Spain, bringing a reinforcement of men, and what was still more needed, a supply of provisions. The latter was quickly distributed among the hungry colonists, but unfortunately a great part was found to have been injured during the voyage. This was a serious misfortune, in a community where the least pressure of scarcity produced murmur and sedition.

By these ships the adelantado received letters from his brother, directing him to found a town and seaport in the mouth of the Ozema, near to the new mines. He requested him also to send prisoners to Spain, such of the caciques and their subjects as had been concerned in the death of any of the colonists; that being considered a sufficient ground, by many of the ablest jurists and theologians of Spain, for selling them as slaves. On the return of the caravels, the adelantado dispatched three hundred Indian prisoners, and three caciques. These formed the ill-starred cargoes about which Niño had made such absurd vaunting, as though his ships were laden with treasure, and which had caused such mortification, disappointment, and delay to Columbus.

Having obtained by this arrival a supply of provisions, the adelantado returned to the fortress of St. Christoval, and from thence proceeded to the Ozema to choose a site for the proposed seaport. After a careful examination, he chose the eastern bank of a natural haven at the mouth of the river. It was easy of access, of sufficient depth, and good anchorage. The river ran through a beautiful and fertile country; its waters were pure and salubrious, and well stocked with fish; its banks were covered with trees bearing the fine fruits of the island, so that in sailing along the fruits and flowers might be plucked with the hand from



the branches which overhung the stream\*. It was in this delightful vicinity that the female cacique lived, who had conceived an affection for the young Spaniard, Miguel Diaz, and had induced him to entice his countrymen to that part of the island. The promise she had given of a friendly reception on the part of her tribe, was faithfully performed.

On a commanding bank of the harbour Don Bartholomew erected a fortress, which at first was called Isabella, but afterwards St. Domingo, and was the origin of the city which still bears that name. The adelantado was of an active and indefatigable spirit. No sooner was the fortress completed, than he left in it a garrison of twenty men, and with the rest of his forces set out on an expedition to visit the dominions of Behechio, one of the principal chieftains of the island. This cacique, as has already been mentioned, reigned over Xaragua, a province comprising almost the whole coast at the west end of the island, including Cape Tiburon, and extending along the south side as far as Point Aguida, or the small island of Beata. It was one of the most populous and fruitful districts. The climate was sheltered and delightful; the people were softer and more graceful in their manners than the rest of the islanders. Being so remote from all the fortresses, the cacique, although he had taken a part in the combination of the chieftains, had hitherto remained free from the incursions and exactions of the white men.

With this cacique resided Anacaona, widow of the late formidable Caonabo. She was sister to Behechio, and had taken refuge with her brother after the capture of her husband. She was one of the most beautiful females of the

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\* P. Martyr, D. 1, L. 5.

island; her name, in the Indian language, signified flower of gold. She possessed a genius superior to the generality of her race, and was said to excel in composing those little legendary ballads, or *areytos*, which the natives chanted as they performed their national dances. All the Spanish writers agree in describing her as possessing a natural dignity and grace hardly to be credited in her ignorant and savage condition. Notwithstanding the ruin with which her husband had been overwhelmed by the hostility of the white men, she appears to have entertained no vindictive feeling towards them. She knew that he had provoked their vengeance by his own voluntary warfare. She regarded the Spaniards with admiration as almost superhuman beings; and her intelligent mind perceived the futility and impolicy of any attempt to resist their superiority in arts and arms. Having great influence over her brother Behechio, she counselled him to take warning by the fate of her husband, and to conciliate the friendship of the Spaniards; and it is supposed that a knowledge of the friendly sentiments, and powerful influence of this princess, in a great measure prompted the adelantado to his present expedition\*.

In passing through those parts of the island which had hitherto been unvisited by the Europeans, the adelantado adopted the same imposing measures which the admiral had used on a former occasion; he put his cavalry in the advance, and entered all the Indian towns in martial array, with standards displayed, and the sound of drum and trumpet; inspiring the natives with great awe and admiration.

After proceeding about thirty leagues, he came to the river Neyva, which, issuing from the mountains of Cibao, divides

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\* Charlevoix, *Hist. St. Doming.* L. 2, p. 147. Muñoz, *Hist. N. Mundo*, L. 6, § 6.

the southern side of the island. Crossing this stream, he dispatched two parties, of ten men each, along the seacoast in search of brazil wood. They found great quantities, and felled many trees, which they stored in the Indian cabins, until they could be taken away by sea.

Inclining with his main force to the right, the adelantado met, not far from the river, with the cacique Behechio, with a great army of his subjects, armed with bows, arrows, and lances. If he had come forth with an intention of opposing this inroad into his forest domains, he was probably daunted by the formidable appearance of the Spaniards. Laying aside his weapons, he advanced and accosted the adelantado very amicably ; professing that he was thus in arms for the purpose of subjecting certain villages along the river, and inquiring at the same time the object of this incursion of the Spaniards. The adelantado assured him that he came in peace, to visit him and his territories, and to pass a little time with him in friendly intercourse at Xaragua. He succeeded so well in allaying the apprehensions of the cacique, that he dismissed his army, and sent swift messengers in advance, to announce his approach, and to order preparations for the suitable reception of so distinguished a guest. As the Spaniards advanced into the territories of the chieftain, and passed through the districts of his inferior caciques, the latter brought forth cassava bread, hemp, cotton, and the various productions of their lands. At length they drew near to the residence of Behechio, which was a large town situated in a beautiful part of the country, near the coast, at the bottom of that deep bay called at present the Bight of Leogane.

The Spaniards had heard many accounts of the soft and delightful region of Xaragua, in one part of which some of the Indian traditions placed their elysian fields. They had

heard much, also, of the beauty and urbanity of the inhabitants; the mode of their reception was calculated to confirm their favourable prepossessions. As they approached the place, thirty females of the cacique's household came forth to meet them, singing their areytos or traditionary ballads, and dancing, and waving palm-branches. The married females wore aprons of embroidered cotton, reaching half way to the knee; the young women were entirely naked, with merely a fillet round the forehead, their hair falling on their shoulders. They were beautifully proportioned, their skin smooth and delicate, and their complexion of a clear and agreeable brown. According to old Peter Martyr, the Spaniards, when they beheld them issuing forth from their green woods, almost imagined they beheld the fabled dryades or native nymphs and fairies of the fountains, sung by the ancient poets. When they came before Don Bartholomew they knelt, and gracefully presented him the green branches\*.

After these came the female cacique Anacaoná, reclining on a kind of light litter, borne by six Indians. Like the other females, she had no other covering than an apron of various coloured cotton. She wore round her head a fragrant garland of red and white flowers, and wreaths of the same round her neck and arms. She received the adelantado and his followers with that natural grace and courtesy for which she was celebrated; manifesting no hostility towards them for the fate her husband had experienced at their hands. On the contrary, she seemed from the first to conceive for them great admiration and sincere friendship.

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\* P. Martyr, Decad. 1, L. 5.

The adelantado and his officers were now conducted to the house of Behechio, where a banquet was served up of utias, a great variety of sea and river fish, with the roots and fine fruits which formed the principal food of the Indians. Here first the Spaniards conquered their repugnance to the guana, the favourite delicacy of the Indians, but which the former had regarded with disgust, as a species of serpent. The adelantado, willing to accustom himself to the usages of the country, was the first to taste of this animal, being kindly pressed thereto by Anacaona. His followers imitated his example; they found it to be highly palatable and delicate, and from that time forward the guana began to get into repute among Spanish epicures\*.

The banquet being over, Don Bartholomew and six of his principal cavaliers were lodged in the dwelling of Behechio; the rest were distributed in the houses of the inferior caciques, where they slept in hammocks of netted cotton, the usual beds of the natives.

For two days they remained with the hospitable Behechio, entertained with various Indian games and festivities, among

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\* These serpentes are like unto crocodiles saving in bygness, they call them guanas. Unto that day none of owre men durste adventure to taste of them, by reason of theyre horrible deformitie and loathsomness, yet the adelantado, being entysed by the pleasantness of the kynge's syster Anacaona, determined to taste of the serpentes. But when he felte the fleshe thereof to be so delycate to his tongue, he fel too amayne without al feare. The which thing his companions perceiving, were not behynde him in greedy-nesse, insomuche that they had now none other talke than of the sweetenesse of these serpentes, which they affirm to be of more pleasant taste than eyther owre phesantes or partreches. P. Martyr, Decad. 1, B. 5. Eden's Eng. trans.

which the most remarkable was the representation of a battle. Two squadrons of naked Indians, armed with bows and arrows, sallied suddenly into the public square, and began to skirmish in a manner similar to the Moorish play of canes, or tilting reeds. By degrees they grew warm, and fought with such earnestness, that four were slain and many wounded; which seemed to increase the interest and pleasure of the spectators. The contest would have continued longer, and might have been still more bloody, had not the adelantado and the other cavaliers interfered, and begged that the game might cease\*.

When the festivities were over, and familiar intercourse had promoted mutual confidence, the adelantado addressed the cacique and Anacaona, on the real object of his visit. He informed them that his brother, the admiral, had been sent to this island by the sovereigns of Castile, who were great and mighty potentates, with many kingdoms under their sway. That the admiral had returned to apprise his sovereigns how many tributary caciques there were in the island, leaving him in command; and that he had come to receive Behechio under the protection of these mighty sovereigns, and to arrange a tribute to be paid by him, in such manner as should be most convenient and satisfactory to himself†.

The cacique was greatly embarrassed by this demand, knowing the sufferings that had been inflicted on the other parts of the island by the avidity of the Spaniards for gold. He replied that he had been apprized that gold was the great object for which the white men had come to their island, and

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\* Las Casas, Hist. Ind. L. 1, C. 114.

† Idem.

that a tribute was paid in it by some of his fellow caciques; but that in no part of his territories was gold to be found, and his subjects hardly knew what it was. To this the adelantado replied, with great adroitness, that nothing was further from the intention or wish of his sovereigns, than to require a tribute in things not produced in his dominions, but that it might be paid in cotton, hemp, and cassava bread, with which the surrounding country appeared to abound.

The countenance of the cacique brightened at this intimation, he promised cheerful compliance, and instantly sent orders to all his subordinate caciques to sow abundance of cotton for the first payment of the stipulated tribute. Having made all the requisite arrangements, the adelantado took the most friendly leave of the worthy Behechio and his sister, and set out for Isabella. Thus by amicable and sagacious management, one of the most extensive provinces of the island was brought into cheerful subjection; and, had not the wise policy of the adelantado been defeated by the excesses of worthless and turbulent men, a large revenue might have been collected, without any recourse to violence or oppression. In all instances, these simple people appear to have been extremely tractable, and meekly, and even cheerfully, to have resigned their rights to the white men, when treated with gentleness and humanity.

## CHAPTER II.

ESTABLISHMENT OF A CHAIN OF MILITARY POSTS—  
INSURRECTION OF GUARIONEX, THE CACIQUE OF THE  
VEGA.

1496. ON arriving at Isabella, Don Bartholomew found it, as usual, a scene of misery and repining. Many had died during his absence; most were ill. Those who were healthy complained of the scarcity of food, and those who were ill, of the want of medicines. The provisions which had been distributed among them, from the supplies brought out a few months before by Perez Alonzo Niño, had been consumed. The colonists, partly from sickness, and partly from repugnance to labour, had neglected to cultivate the surrounding country, and the Indians, on whom they had chiefly depended, outraged by their oppressions, had abandoned the vicinity, and fled to the mountains; preferring to subsist on roots and herbs, in their rugged retreats, rather than remain in the luxuriant plains, subject to the wrongs and cruelties of the white men. The history of this island presents continual pictures of the miseries, the actual want, and poverty produced by the grasping avidity of gold. It had rendered the Spaniards heedless of all the less obvious, but more certain and salubrious sources of wealth. All labour seemed lost, that was to produce profit by any circuitous process. Instead of cultivating the luxu-



riant soil around them, and deriving real treasures from its surface, they thought only of mines and golden streams, and were starving in the midst of fertility.

No sooner were the provisions exhausted, which had been brought out by Niño, than the colonists began to break forth in their accustomed murmurs. They represented themselves as neglected by Columbus; who, amidst the blandishments and delights of a court, thought little of their sufferings. They considered themselves equally forgotten by government; while, having no vessel in the harbour, they were destitute of all means of sending home intelligence of their disastrous situation, and of imploring relief.

To remove this last cause of discontent, and to furnish some object for their hopes and thoughts to rally round, the adelantado ordered that two caravels should be built at Isabella, for the use of the island. To relieve the settlement also from all useless and repining individuals, during this time of scarcity, he distributed such as were too ill to labour or to bear arms into the interior; where they would have the benefit of a better climate, and more abundant supply of Indian provisions. He established, at the same time, a chain of military posts between Isabella and the new port of St. Domingo. They consisted of five fortified houses, each surrounded by its dependent hamlet. The first of these was about nine leagues from Isabella, and was called La Esperanza. Six leagues beyond, was Santa Catarina. Four leagues and a half further, was Santiago; and five leagues further, fort Concepcion; which was fortified with great care, being at the foot of the golden mountains of Cibao, in the vast and populous Vega, and within half a league of the residence of its cacique, Guarionex\*. Having thus relieved

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\* P. Martyr, D. 1, L. 5.

Isabella of all its useless population, and left none but such as were too ill to be removed, or were required for the service and protection of the place, and the construction of the caravels, the adelantado returned, with a large body of the most effective men, to the fortress of St. Domingo.

The military posts thus established, succeeded for a time in overawing the natives; but fresh hostilities soon began to be manifested, excited by a different cause from the preceding. Among the missionaries who had accompanied father Boil to the island, were two friars, of far greater zeal than their superior. When he returned to Spain, they remained behind, earnestly bent upon the fulfilment of their mission. One was called Roman Pane, a poor hermit, as he styled himself, of the order of St. Jeronimo; the other was Juan Borgoñon, a Franciscan. They resided for some time among the Indians of the Vega, strenuously endeavouring to make converts. They had succeeded with one family consisting of sixteen persons; the chief of which, on being baptized, had taken the name of Juan Mateo. The conversion of the cacique Guarionex, however, was the great object of their pious labours. The extent and importance of his possessions, made his conversion of great consequence to the interests of the colony; and the zealous fathers considered it a means of bringing his numerous subjects under the dominion of the church. For some time the cacique lent a willing ear. He learnt the Pater Noster, the Ave Maria, and the Creed, and made his whole family repeat them daily. The other caciques of the Vega, and of the province of Cibao, however, reproached him and scoffed at him, for meanly conforming to the laws and customs of the strangers, who were usurpers of his possessions, and oppressors of his nation. The friars complained that, in consequence of these

evil communications, their fancied convert suddenly relapsed into his infidelity; but another and more grievous cause is assigned for his recantation. His favourite wife was seduced, or treated with outrage, by one of the Spaniards of some authority; and the indignant cacique renounced all faith in a religion which, as he supposed, admitted of such atrocities. Losing all hope of effecting the conversion of Guarionex, the missionaries removed to the territories of another cacique, taking with them Juan Mateo, their Indian convert. Before their departure they erected a small chapel, and furnished it with an altar, crucifix, and images, for the use of the family of Mateo.

The friars had scarcely departed, when several Indians entered the chapel, broke the images in pieces, trampled them under foot, and buried them in a neighbouring field. This, it was said, was done by order of Guarionex, in contempt of the holy religion from which he had apostatized. A complaint of this enormity was carried to the adelantado, who ordered a process to be immediately instituted, and those who were found culpable, to be punished according to the law. It was a period of great rigour in ecclesiastical law, especially among the Spanish. In Spain all heresies in religion, all recantations from the faith, and all acts of sacrilege, either by Moor or Jew, were punished with fire and faggot. Such was the fate of the poor ignorant Indians, convicted of this outrage on the church. It is questionable whether Guarionex had any hand in this offence, and it is probable that the whole affair was exaggerated. A proof of the credit due to the evidence brought forward, may be judged by one of the facts recorded by Roman Pane, the "poor hermit." The field in which the holy images were buried, was planted, he says, with certain roots shaped like

a turnip, or radish, several of which coming up in the neighbourhood of the images, were found to have grown most miraculously in the form of a cross\*.

1497. The cruel punishment inflicted on these Indians, instead of daunting their countrymen, filled them with horror and indignation. They had not been accustomed to such stern rule and ferocious justice; and having no clear ideas, nor powerful sentiments, with respect to religion of any kind, they could not comprehend the nature nor extent of the crime committed. Even Guarionex, a man naturally moderate and pacific, was highly incensed at this assumption of power within his territories, and this inhuman death inflicted on his subjects. The other caciques perceived his irritation, and endeavoured to induce him to unite in a sudden insurrection, that by one general and vigorous effort, they might break the yoke of their oppressors. Guarionex wavered for some time. He knew the martial skill and prowess of the Spaniards. He stood in awe of their cavalry, and he had before him the disastrous fate of Caonabo. But his heart was full of despair, and he beheld in the domination of these strangers the assured ruin of his race. The early writers speak of a tradition current among the inhabitants of the island, respecting this Guarionex. He was of an ancient line of hereditary caciques. His father, in times long preceding the discovery, having fasted for five days according to their superstitious observances, applied to his zemi, or household deity, for information of things to come. He received for answer, that within a few years there should come to the island a nation covered with clothing, which should destroy all their customs and ceremonies, and should

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\* Escritura de Fr. Roman. Hist. del Almirante.

slay their children, or reduce them to painful servitude\*. This tradition was probably invented by the butios, or priests, of the Indians, after the Spaniards had begun to exercise their severities. Whether this prediction had an effect in disposing the mind of Guarionex to hostilities against the strangers is uncertain. Some have asserted that he was compelled to take up arms by the importunities of his subjects, who still flattered themselves with the hope of success, and threatened, in case of his refusal, to choose some other chieftain: while others have alleged the outrage committed upon his favourite wife, as the principal cause of irritation†. It was probably all these things combined, which at length induced the unfortunate cacique to listen to the counsels of his neighbouring chieftains, and to enter into their conspiracy. A secret consultation was held among them, wherein it was concerted, that on the day of payment of their quarterly tribute, when a great number could assemble without causing suspicion, they should suddenly rise upon the Spaniards and massacre them‡.

By some means, the garrison at fort Conception received intimation of this conspiracy. Being but a handful of men, and surrounded by hostile tribes, they were alarmed for their safety. They immediately dispatched an Indian messenger to the adelantado, at St. Domingo, begging immediate assistance. How to get this letter safe to his hands, was an anxious question. Their safety depended upon it. The Indian messenger might be intercepted, and the letter taken from him, for the natives had discovered that these letters

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\* Peter Martyr, D. 1, L. 9.

† Las Casas, Hist. Ind. L. 1, C. 121.

‡ Herrera, D. 1, L. 3, C. 5. P. Martyr, D. 1, L. 5.

had a wonderful power of communicating intelligence, and fancied that they could talk. The letter was therefore enclosed in a reed, which the messenger used as a staff. He was, in fact, intercepted, but affected to be dumb and lame. He spoke only by signs, intimating that he was returning to his home, and leaning on his staff, limped along with extreme difficulty. He was suffered to depart, and dragged himself feebly forward until out of sight, when he resumed his speed, and bore the letter safely and expeditiously to St. Domingo\*.

The adelantado, with his characteristic promptness and activity, immediately set out with a body of troops for the fortress; and though his men were much enfeebled by scanty fare, hard service, and long marches, he hurried them rapidly forward. Never did aid arrive more timely. The Indians were already assembled in the plain, to the amount of many thousands, armed after their manner, and waiting for the appointed time to strike the blow. After consulting with the commander of the fortress, and the other principal officers, the adelantado concerted his mode of proceeding. Ascertaining the places in which the various caciques had distributed their forces, he appointed an officer with a body of men to each cacique, with orders at an appointed hour of the night to rush suddenly into the villages where they were sleeping, to surprise them unarmed and unsuspecting, and to bind the caciques and bring them off prisoners, before their subjects could assemble for their defence. As Guarionex was the most important personage, and his capture would probably be attended with most difficulty and danger, the adelantado took the charge of it upon himself, at the head of one hundred men.

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\* Herrera, Hist. Ind. D. 1, L. 3, C. 6.

This sagacious stratagem, founded upon a knowledge of the attachment of the Indians to their chieftains, and calculated to spare a great effusion of blood, was completely successful. The villages, having no walls nor other defences, were quietly entered at midnight; and the Spaniards, rushing suddenly into the houses where the caciques were quartered, seized and bound them, to the number of fourteen, and hurried them off prisoners to the fortress, before any effort could be made for their defence or rescue. The Indians, struck with terror and confusion, made no resistance, nor any show of hostility. Surrounding the fortress in great multitudes, but without weapons, they filled the air with doleful howlings and lamentations, imploring the release of their chieftains. The adelantado completed his enterprize with the spirit, sagacity and moderation with which he had hitherto conducted it. He informed himself of the causes which had led to this conspiracy, and of the individuals who had been most culpable. Two of the caciques, the principal movers of the insurrection, and who had most wrought upon the easy nature of Guarionex, were put to death. As to that unfortunate cacique, the adelantado ascertained the deep wrongs he had suffered, and the slowness with which he had been provoked to revenge. He magnanimously pardoned him: nay, according to Las Casas, he proceeded with stern justice against the Spaniard, whose outrage on the wife of the cacique had sunk so deeply in his heart. The adelantado extended his lenity also to the remaining chieftains of the conspiracy. Apprehensive that severe measures might incense their subjects, or drive them to despondency, and induce them to abandon the Vega, he held forth to them promises of great favours and rewards, if they should continue firm in their loyalty, but terrible

punishments, should they again be found in rebellion. The heart of Guarionex was subdued by the unexpected clemency of the adelantado. He made a speech to his people, setting forth the irresistible might and valour of the Spaniards; their great lenity to offenders, and their generosity to such as were faithful; and he earnestly exhorted them henceforth to cultivate their friendship. The Indians listened to him with attention; his praises of the white men were confirmed in their minds by this great instance of moderation on the part of the adelantado. When their cacique had concluded, they took him up with transport on their shoulders, bore him to his habitation with songs and shouts of joy, and for some time the tranquillity of the Vega was restored\*.

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\* P. Martyr, D. 1, L. 5. Herrera, H. Ind. D. 1, L. 3, C. 6.



## CHAPTER III.

THE ADELANTADO REPAIRS TO XARAGUA TO RECEIVE  
TRIBUTE.

1497. WITH all his energy and discretion, the adelantado found it difficult to manage the proud and turbulent spirits of the Spanish colonists. Their discontents continued to increase, and their impatience of any salutary rule. They could ill brook the rigorous sway of a foreigner, who, when they attempted to be restive, curbed them with a firm and iron hand. Don Bartholomew had not the same legitimate authority, in their eyes, as his brother. The splendid reputation of the admiral gave dignity and grandeur to his name. He was the discoverer of the country, and the authorized representative of the sovereigns; yet even him they with difficulty brought themselves to obey. The adelantado, however, was regarded by many of them as a mere intruder, shouldering himself into power on the merits and services of his brother, and possessing no authority from the crown for such high command. They spoke with impatience and indignation of the long absence of the admiral, and of his fancied inattention to their wants; little aware of the incessant anxieties he was suffering on their account, during his detention in Spain. The sagacious measure of the adelantado, in building the caravels, for some time diverted their attention. They

watched their progress with solicitude, looking upon them as a means either of obtaining relief, or of abandoning the island. Don Bartholomew was aware that repining and discontented men should never be left to idleness. He sought continual means of keeping them in movement; and indeed a state of constant activity was congenial to his own vigorous spirit. About this time, messengers arrived from Behechio, cacique of Xaragua, informing him that he had large quantities of cotton, and other articles, in which his tribute was to be paid, ready for delivery. The adelantado immediately summoned a numerous train, who gladly set forth with him to revisit this fruitful and happy region. They were again received with songs and dances, and all the national demonstrations of respect and amity, by Behechio and his sister Anacaona. The latter appeared to be highly popular among the natives, and to have almost as much sway in Xaragua as her brother. Her natural ease, and the graceful dignity of her manners, more and more won the admiration of the Spaniards.

The adelantado found thirty-two inferior caciques assembled in the house of Behechio, awaiting his arrival, with their respective tributes. The cotton which they had brought amounted to so great a quantity, as to fill one of their houses: having delivered this, they gratuitously offered the adelantado to give him as much cassava bread as he desired. The offer was most acceptable, in the present necessitous state of the colony; and Don Bartholomew sent to Isabella, for one of the caravels, which was nearly finished, to be dispatched as soon as possible to Xaragua, to be freighted with bread and cotton.

In the meantime, the utmost kindness was lavished on the Spaniards by these gentle and generous people; they

brought from all quarters large supplies of provisions, and they entertained their guests with continual festivity and banquetting. The early Spanish writers, whose imaginations were heated by the accounts of the voyagers, and who could not form an idea of the simplicity of savage life, especially in these parts, which were supposed to border upon Asia, often speak in terms of oriental magnificence of the entertainments of the natives; the palaces of the caciques, and the lords and ladies of their courts; as if they were describing the abodes of Asiatic potentates. The accounts given of Xaragua, however, have a different character; and give a picture of savage life, in its perfection of indolent ease, and untasked enjoyment. The troubles which distracted the other parts of devoted Hayti, had not yet reached the inhabitants of this pleasant region. Living among beautiful and fruitful groves, on the borders of a sea which appeared for ever tranquil and unvexed by storms; having few wants, and those readily supplied, they appeared emancipated from the common lot of labour, and to pass their lives in one uninterrupted holy-day. When the Spaniards regarded the fertility and sweetness of this country, the gentleness of its people, and the beauty of its women, they pronounced it a perfect paradise.

At length the caravel arrived which was to be freighted with the articles of tribute. It anchored about six miles distant from the residence of Behechio, and Anacaona proposed to her brother that they should go together, to behold what she called the great canoe of the white men. On their way to the coast, the adelantado was lodged one night in a village, in a house where Anacaona treasured up all those articles which she esteemed most rare and precious. They consisted of various manufactures of cotton ingeniously

wrought; of chairs, tables, and other articles of furniture, formed of ebony and other kinds of wood, carved with figures and devices; and of household utensils, some of clay, others of wood, all evincing great skill and ingenuity, in a people who had no iron tools to work with. Such were the simple treasures of this Indian princess, of which she generously made numerous presents to her guests.

Nothing could exceed the wonder and delight of this intelligent woman, when she first beheld the ship. Her brother, who treated her with a fraternal fondness, and a respectful attention worthy of civilized life, had prepared two canoes, gaily painted and decorated; one to convey her and her attendants, and the other for himself and his chieftains. Anacaona, however, preferred to embark, with her attendants, in the ship's boat, with the adelantado. As they approached the caravel, the cannon fired a salute. At the sound of this sudden thunder, and the sight of volumes of smoke, bursting from the sides of the ship, and rolling along the sea, Anacaona, overcome with dismay, fell into the arms of the adelantado, and her attendants would have leapt overboard in their affright. The laughter and the cheerful words of Don Bartholomew, however, speedily reassured them. As they drew nearer to the vessel, several instruments of martial music struck up, with which they were greatly delighted. Their admiration increased on entering on board of the caravel. Accustomed only to their simple and slight canoes, every thing here appeared to be on a solid and complicated, and on a wonderfully vast scale. But when the anchor was weighed, the sails were spread, and, aided by a gentle breeze, they beheld this vast mass, moving as it were by its own volition, veering from side to side, and playing like a huge monster on the deep, the brother and sister remained

gazing at each other in mute astonishment\*. Nothing seems to have filled the mind of the most stoical savage with more wonder, than that sublime and beautiful trophy of human genius, a ship under sail.

Having freighted and dispatched the caravel, the adelantado made many presents to Behechio, his sister, and their attendants, and took leave of them, to return by land, with his troops, to Isabella. Anacaona showed great affliction at their parting, entreating him to remain some time longer with them, and appearing fearful that they had failed in their humble attempts to please him. She even offered to follow him to the settlement, nor would she be consoled until he had promised to return again to Xaraguat.

It is impossible not to be struck with the great ability shown by the adelantado in the course of his brief government of the island. Wonderfully alert and active, he made repeated marches of great extent, from one remote province to another, and was always at the post of danger at the critical moment. By skilful management he had, with a handful of men, defeated a formidable insurrection, without any effusion of blood. He had conciliated the most inveterate enemies among the natives, by his great moderation, while he deterred all wanton hostilities by the infliction of signal punishments. He had made firm friends of the most important princes; brought their dominions under cheerful tribute; opened new sources of supplies for the colony; and procured relief for its immediate wants. Had his judicious measures been seconded by those under his command, the whole country would have been a scene of

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\* P. Martyr, D. 1, L. 5. Herrera. D. 1, Lib. 3, C. 6.

† Ramusio, V. 3, p. 9.

tranquil prosperity ; and would have produced great revenues to the crown, without cruelty to the natives. But, like his brother the admiral, he was doomed to have his good intentions, and judicious arrangements, thwarted by the vile passions, and perverse conduct of others. While he was absent from Isabella, new mischiefs had been fomented there, which were soon to throw the whole island into confusion.

## CHAPTER IV.

## CONSPIRACY OF ROLDAN.

1497. THE prime mover of the present mischief in the colony was one Francisco Roldan, a man who was under the deepest obligations to the admiral. Raised by him from poverty and obscurity, he had been employed at first in menial capacities, but, showing strong natural talents, and great assiduity, he had been made ordinary alcalde; equivalent to justice of the peace. The able manner in which he had acquitted himself in this situation, and the persuasion of his great fidelity and gratitude, had induced Columbus, on departing for Spain, to appoint him alcalde mayor, or chief judge of the island. It is true he was an uneducated man; but, as there were as yet no intricacies of law in the colony, the office required little else than shrewd good sense, and upright principles, for its discharge\*.

Roldan was one of those base spirits which grow venomous in the sunshine of prosperity. He had seen his benefactor return to Spain apparently under a cloud of disgrace; a long interval had elapsed without any tidings from him; he considered him a fallen man, and began to devise how he might profit by his downfall. He was intrusted with an

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\* Herrera, D. 1, L. 3, C. 1.

office inferior only to that of the adelantado; the brothers of Columbus were highly unpopular; he imagined it possible to ruin them, both with the colonists and with the government at home, and by dexterous cunning and bustling activity, to work his way into the command of the colony. The vigorous and somewhat austere character of the adelantado for some time kept him in awe; but when he was absent from the settlement, Roldan was able to carry on his machinations with confidence. Don Diego, who then commanded at Isabella, was an upright and worthy man, but deficient in energy. Roldan felt himself his superior in talent and spirit, and his self-conceit was wounded at being inferior to him in authority. He soon made a party among the daring and dissolute of the community, and secretly loosened the ties of order and good government, by listening to and encouraging the discontents of the common people, and directing them against the character and conduct of Columbus and his brothers. He had heretofore been employed as superintendant of various public works; this had brought him into habits of familiar communication with workmen, sailors and others of the lower order. His originally vulgar character enabled him to adapt himself to their intellects and manners, while his present standing gave him consequence in their eyes. Finding them full of murmurs about hard treatment, severe toil, and the long absence of the admiral, he affected to be moved by their distresses. He threw out suggestions that the admiral might never return, being disgraced and ruined, in consequence of the representations of Aguado. He sympathized with the hard treatment they experienced from the adelantado and his brother Don Diego, who being foreigners could take no interest in their welfare, nor feel a proper respect for the pride of a



Spaniard; but who used them merely as slaves, to build houses and fortresses for them, or to swell their state, and secure their power, as they marched about the island, enriching themselves with the spoils of the caciques. By this means he exasperated their feelings to such a height, that it is said they had at one time formed a conspiracy to take away the life of the adelantado, by way of delivering themselves from an odious tyrant. The time and place for the perpetration of the act were concerted. The adelantado had condemned to death a Spaniard of the name of Berabona, a friend of Roldan, and of several of the conspirators. What was his offence is not precisely stated, but from a passage in *Las Casas*\*, there is reason to believe that he was the very Spaniard who had violated the favourite wife of Guarionex, the cacique of the Vega. The adelantado would be present at the execution. It was arranged, therefore, that when the populace were assembled, a tumult should be made as if by accident, and in the confusion of the moment Don Bartholomew should be despatched with a poniard. Fortunately for the adelantado, he pardoned the criminal, the assemblage did not take place, and the plan of the conspirators was disconcerted†.

When Don Bartholomew was absent collecting the tribute in Xaragua, Roldan thought that it was a favourable time to bring affairs to a crisis. He had sounded the feelings of the colonists, and ascertained that there was a large party disposed for open sedition. His plan was to create a popular tumult; to interpose in his official character of *alcalde mayor*; to throw the blame upon the oppression and injustice of Don Diego and

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\* *Las Casas*, Hist. Ind. MS. L. 1, C. 118.

† Hist. del Almirante, Cap. 73.

his brother, and, while he usurped the reins of authority, to appear as if actuated only by zeal for the peace and prosperity of the islands, and the interests of the sovereigns.

A pretext soon presented itself for the proposed tumult. When the caravel returned from Xaragua, laden with the Indian tributes, and the cargo was discharged, Don Diego had the vessel drawn up on the land, to protect it from accidents, or from any sinister designs of the disaffected colonists. Roldan immediately pointed this circumstance out to his partizans. He secretly inveighed against the hardship of having this vessel drawn on shore, instead of being left afloat for the benefit of the colony, or sent to Spain to make known their distresses. He hinted that the true reason was the fear of the adelantado and his brother, lest accounts should be carried to Spain of their misconduct; and he affirmed that they wished to remain undisturbed masters of the island, and keep the Spaniards there as subjects, or rather as slaves. The people took fire at these suggestions. They had long looked forward to the completion of the caravels as their only chance for relief; they now became openly clamorous, and insisted that the vessel should be launched, and sent to Spain for supplies. Don Diego endeavoured to convince them of the folly of their demand, the vessel not being rigged and equipped for such a voyage; but the more he attempted to pacify them by fair words, the more unreasonable and turbulent they became. Roldan, also, became more bold and explicit in his instigations. He advised them to launch and take possession of the caravel, as the only mode of regaining their independence. They might then throw off the tyranny of these upstart strangers, enemies in their hearts to the Spaniards, and might lead a life of ease and pleasure; sharing equally all that they might gain by barter in

the island; employing the Indians as slaves to work for them, and enjoying unrestrained indulgence with respect to the Indian women\*.

Don Diego received intimation of what was fermenting among the people, and of the dangerous intrigues of Roldan, yet he feared to come to an open rupture, in the present tumultuous state of the colony. He suddenly detached him, therefore, with forty men, to the Vega, under pretext of overawing certain of the natives, who had refused to pay their tribute, and had shown a disposition to revolt. Roldan made use of this opportunity to strengthen his faction. He made friends and partizans among the discontented caciques; secretly justifying them in their resistance to the imposition of tribute, and promising them redress. He secured the devotion of his own soldiers by great acts of indulgence, disarming and dismissing such as refused full participation in his plans; and returned with his little band to Isabella, where he felt secure of a strong party among the common people.

The adelantado had by this time returned from Xaragua; but Roldan, feeling himself at the head of a strong faction, and arrogating to himself great authority from his official station, now openly demanded that the caravel should be launched, or license given to himself and his followers to launch it. The adelantado, irritated at his arrogance, peremptorily refused; observing that neither he nor his companions were mariners, nor was the caravel furnished and equipped for sea; and that neither the safety of the vessel, nor of the people, should be endangered by their attempt to navigate her.

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\* Hist del Almirante, Cap. 73.

Roldan perceived that his motives were suspected, and felt that the adelantado was too formidable an adversary to contend with, in any open sedition, at Isabella. He determined, therefore, to carry his plans into operation in some more favourable part of the island; always trusting to excuse any open rebellion against the authority of Don Bartholomew, by representing it as a patriotic opposition to his tyranny over Spaniards. He had seventy well armed and determined men under his command, and he trusted, on erecting his standard, to be joined by all the disaffected throughout the island. He set off suddenly, therefore, for the Vega; intending to surprise the fortress of Conception, and by getting command of that post, and the rich country adjacent, to set the adelantado at defiance.

He stopped, on his way, at various Indian villages, in which the Spaniards were distributed, endeavouring to enlist the latter in his party, holding out promises of great gain and free living. He attempted also to seduce the natives from their allegiance, by promising them freedom from all tribute. Those caciques with whom he had maintained a previous understanding, received him with open arms, particularly one who had taken the name of Diego Marque, whose village he made his head-quarters, being about two leagues from fort Conception. He was disappointed in his hopes of surprising the fortress. Its commander, Miguel Ballester, was an old and staunch soldier, both resolute and wary. He drew himself into his fortress, on the approach of Roldan, and closed his gates. His garrison was small, but his fortress, situated on the side of a hill, with a river running at its foot, was proof against any sudden assault. Roldan had still some hopes that Ballester might be disaffected to government, and might be gradually brought into

his plans; or that the garrison would be disposed to desert, tempted by the licentious life which he permitted among his followers. In the neighbourhood was the town inhabited by Guarionex. Here were quartered thirty soldiers, under the command of captain Garcia de Barrantes. Roldan repaired thither with his armed force, hoping to enlist Barrantes and his party; but the captain shut himself up with his men in a fortified house, refusing to permit them to hold any communication with Roldan. The latter threatened to set fire to the house; but, after a little consideration, contented himself with seizing their store of provisions, and then marched towards fort Conception, which was not quite half a league distant\*.

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\* Herrera, Decad. 1, L. 3, C. 7. Hist. del Almirante, Cap. 74.

## CHAPTER V.

THE ADELANTADO REPAIRS TO THE VEGA IN RELIEF OF  
FORT CONCEPTION—HIS INTERVIEW WITH ROLDAN.

1497. THE adelantado had received intelligence of the flagitious proceedings of Roldan; yet for a time he hesitated to set out in pursuit of him. He had lost all confidence in the loyalty of the people around him; he knew not how far the conspiracy extended, nor on whom he could rely. Diego de Escobar, alcayde of the fortress of La Magdalena, together with Adrian de Moxica and Pedro de Valdivieso, all principal men, were in league with Roldan. He feared that the commander of fort Concepcion might likewise be in the plot, and the whole island in arms against him. He was reassured, however, by tidings from Miguel Ballester. That loyal veteran wrote to him pressing letters for succour, representing the weakness of his garrison, and the increasing forces of the rebels.

Don Bartholomew now hastened to his assistance, with his accustomed promptness, and threw himself with a reinforcement into the fortress. Being ignorant of the force of the rebels, and doubtful of the loyalty of his own followers, he determined to adopt mild measures. Understanding that Roldan was quartered at a village but half a league distant, he sent a messenger to him, remonstrating on the flagrant

irregularity of his conduct, the injury it was calculated to produce in the island, and the certain ruin it must bring upon himself. He summoned him to appear at the fortress, pledging his word for his personal safety. Roldan repaired accordingly to fort Conception, where the adelantado held a parley with him from a window, demanding the reason of his appearing in arms in opposition to royal authority. Roldan replied hardily, that he was in the service of his sovereigns, defending their subjects from the oppressions of men who sought their destruction. The adelantado ordered him to surrender his staff of office, as alcalde mayor, and to submit peaceably to superior authority. Roldan refused to resign his office, or to put himself in the power of Don Bartholomew, whom he charged with seeking his life. He refused also to submit to any trial, unless commanded by the king. Pretending, however, to make no resistance to the peaceable exercise of authority, he offered to go with his followers, and reside at any place the adelantado might appoint. The latter immediately designated the village of the cacique Diego Colon, the same native of the Lucayos islands who had been baptized in Spain, and had since married a daughter of Guarionex. Roldan objected; pretending that there were not sufficient provisions to be had there for the subsistence of his men, and departed, declaring that he would seek a more eligible residence elsewhere\*.

He now proposed to his followers to establish themselves, and take possession of the remote province of Xaragua. The Spaniards who had returned from thence, had given voluptuous accounts of the life they had led there; of the fertility of the soil, the sweetness of the climate, the hospitality

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\* Herrera, D. 1, L. 3, C. 7. Hist. del Almirante, Cap. 74.

and gentleness of the people, their feasts, dances, and various amusements, and above all, the beauty of the women; for they had been captivated by the naked charms of the dancing nymphs of Xaragua. In this delightful region, emancipated from the iron rule of the adelantado, and relieved from the necessity of irksome labour, they might lead a life of perfect freedom and indulgence, and have a world of beauty at their command. In short, Roldan drew a picture of loose sensual enjoyment, such as he knew to be irresistible with men of idle and dissolute habits. His followers acceded with joy to his proposition; some preparations, however, were necessary to carry it into effect. Taking advantage of the absence of the adelantado, he suddenly marched off with his band to Isabella, and entering it in a manner by surprise, endeavoured to launch the caravel, with which they might sail to Xaragua. Don Diego Columbus hearing the tumult, issued forth with several persons of distinction; but such was the force of the mutineers, and their menacing conduct, that he was obliged to withdraw, with a number of his most faithful adherents, into the fortress. Roldan held several parleys with him, and offered to submit to his command, provided he would set himself up in opposition to his brother the adelantado. His proposition was treated with scorn. The fortress was too strong to be assailed with success, he found it impossible to launch the caravel, and feared the adelantado might return, and he be enclosed between two forces. He proceeded, therefore, in all haste, to make provisions for the proposed expedition to Xaragua. Still pretending to act in his official capacity, and to do every thing from loyal motives for the protection and support of the oppressed subjects of the crown, he broke open the royal warehouse, with shouts of Long live the king, supplied his followers with arms, am-



munition, clothing, and whatever they desired from the public stores ; proceeded to the enclosure where the cattle and other European animals were kept to breed ; took whatever he thought necessary for his intended establishment ; and permitted his followers to kill such of the remaining cattle as they might want for present supply. Having committed this wasteful ravage, he marched in triumph out of Isabella\*. Reflecting, however, on the prompt and vigorous character of the adelantado, he felt that his situation would be but little secure with such an active enemy behind him ; who, on extricating himself from present perplexities, would not fail to pursue him to his proposed paradise of Xaragua. He determined, therefore, to march again to the Vega, and endeavour either to get possession of the person of the adelantado, or to strike some blow at him, in his present crippled state, that should disable him from yielding future molestation. Returning, therefore, to the vicinity of fort Concepcion, he endeavoured in every way, by the means of subtle emissaries, to seduce the garrison to desertion, or to stir it up to revolt.

The adelantado had ample information of the machinations of the enemy, and of his own personal danger. He dared not take the field with his forces, having no confidence in their fidelity. He knew that they listened wistfully to the emissaries of Roldan, and contrasted the meagre fare and stern discipline of the garrison, with the abundant cheer and easy misrule that prevailed among the rebels. To counteract these seductions, he relaxed from his usual strictness, treating his men with great indulgence, and promising them large rewards. By these means he was enabled to maintain

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\* Hist. del Almirante, Cap. 74. Herrera, D. 1, L. 2, C. 7.

some degree of loyalty among his men, his service having an advantage over that of Roldan, as being on the side of government and law.

Finding that his attempts to corrupt the garrison were unsuccessful, and fearing some sudden sally from the vigorous adelantado, Roldan drew off to a distance, and sought by all insidious means to strengthen his own power, and weaken that of the government. He asserted equal right to manage the affairs of the island with the adelantado, and pretended to have separated from him on account of his being passionate and vindictive in the exercise of his authority. He represented him as the tyrant of the Spaniards, the oppressor of the Indians. For himself, he assumed the character of a redresser of grievances, and champion of the injured. He pretended to feel a patriotic indignation at the indignities heaped upon Spaniards by a family of obscure and arrogant foreigners; and professed to free the natives from tributes wrung from them by these rapacious men, for their own enrichment, and contrary to the beneficent intentions of the Spanish monarchs. He connected himself closely with the Carib cacique Manicaotex, brother of the late Caonabó, whose son and nephew were in his possession as hostages for payment of tribute. This warlike chieftain he conciliated by presents and caresses, bestowing on him the appellation of brother\*. In fact, the unhappy natives, deceived by his professions, and overjoyed at the idea of having a protector in arms for their defence, submitted cheerfully to a thousand impositions, supplying his followers with provisions in abundance, and bringing to Roldan all the gold they could collect; voluntarily yielding him heavier tributes than those from which he pretended to free them.

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\* Las Casas, Hist. Ind. L. 1, C. 118.

The affairs of the island were now in a lamentable situation. The Indians, perceiving the dissensions among the white men, and encouraged by the protection of Roldan, began to throw off all allegiance to the government. The caciques at a distance ceased to send in their tributes; and those who were near by, were excused by the adelantado, that, by indulgence, he might retain their friendship in this time of danger. Roldan's faction daily gained strength; they ranged insolently and at large in the open country, cherished by the misguided natives; while the Spaniards who remained loyal, fearing conspiracies among the natives, had to keep under shelter of the fort, or in the strong houses which they had erected in the villages. The commanders were obliged to palliate all kinds of slights and indignities, both from their soldiers and from the Indians, fearful of driving them to sedition by any severity. The clothing, and munitions of all kind, either for maintenance or defence, were rapidly wasting away; and the want of all supplies or tidings from Spain, was sinking the spirits of the well affected into despondency. The adelantado was shut up in fort Conception, in daily expectation of being openly besieged by Roldan, and secretly informed that means were taken to destroy him, should he issue from the walls of the fortress\*.

Such was the desperate state to which the colony was reduced, in consequence of the long detention of Columbus in Spain, and the impediments thrown in the way of all his measures for the benefit of the island, by the delays of cabinets and the chicanery of Fonseca and his satellites. At this critical juncture, when faction reigned triumphant, and the colony was on the brink of ruin, tidings were brought to the Vega-

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\* Las Casas, Hist. Ind. L. 1, Cap. 119.

that Pero Fernandez Coronal had arrived at the port of St. Domingo, with two ships, bringing supplies of all kind, and a strong reinforcement of troopst.

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\* Las Casas. Herrera. Hist. del Almirante.

## CHAPTER VI.

SECOND INSURRECTION OF GUARIONEX, AND FLIGHT TO  
THE MOUNTAINS OF CIGUAY.

**1498.** THE arrival of Coronal took place on the third of February, 1498 : it was the salvation of the colony. The reinforcements of troops and the supplies of all kinds strengthened the hands of Don Bartholomew. The royal confirmation of his title and authority as adelantado at once dispelled all aspersions as to the legitimacy of his power, and confirmed the fidelity of his adherents ; and the tidings that the admiral was in high favour at court, and would soon arrive with a powerful squadron, struck consternation into those who had entered into the rebellion on the presumption of his having fallen into disgrace.

The adelantado no longer remained mewed up in his fortress, but set out immediately for St. Domingo, with a part of his troops, although a very superior rebel force was at the village of the cacique Guarionex, only two bow-shot distance. Roldan followed slowly and gloomily with his party, anxious to ascertain the truth of these tidings, to make partizans if possible among those who had newly arrived ; and to take advantage of every circumstance that might befriend his rash and hazardous fortunes. The adelantado left strong guards on the passes of the roads to prevent his near ap-

proach to St. Domingo, but Roldan paused within a few leagues of the place.

When the adelantado found himself secure in St. Domingo with this augmentation of force and the prospect of a still greater reinforcement at hand, his magnanimous feelings prevailed over his indignation, and he sought by gentle means to allay the popular seditions, that the island might be restored to tranquillity before his brother's arrival. He considered that the colonists had suffered greatly from the want of supplies; that their discontents had been quickened by the severities he had been compelled to inflict; and that many had been led to rebellion by doubts of the legitimacy of his authority: while therefore he proclaimed the royal act sanctioning his title and powers, he promised also amnesty for all past offences on condition of immediate return to allegiance. Hearing that Roldan was within five leagues of St. Domingo with his band, he sent Pero Hernandez Coronal, who had been appointed by the sovereigns alguazil mayor of the island, to exhort him to obedience, promising him oblivion of the past. He trusted that the representations of a discreet and honourable man like Coronal, who had been witness of the favour in which his brother stood in Spain, would convince the rebels of the hopelessness of their cause. Roldan, however, conscious of his guilt and doubtful of the clemency of Don Bartholomew, feared to venture within his power: he determined also to prevent his followers from communicating with Coronal, lest they should be seduced from him by the promise of pardon. When that emissary therefore approached the encampment of the rebels, he was opposed in a narrow pass by a body of archers, with their crossbows levelled. "Halt there! traitor!" cried Roldan,

“had you arrived eight days later we should all have been one\*.”

It was in vain that Coronal endeavoured by fair reasoning and earnest entreaty to win this perverse and turbulent man from his career. Roldan answered with hardihood and defiance; professing to oppose only the tyranny and misrule of the adelantado, but to be ready to submit to the admiral on his arrival. He and several of his principal confederates wrote letters to the same effect to their friends in St. Domingo, urging them to plead their cause with the admiral when he should arrive, and to assure him of their disposition to acknowledge his authority.

When Coronal returned with accounts of Roldan's contumacy the adelantado proclaimed him and his followers traitors. That shrewd rebel, however, did not suffer his men to remain within either the seduction of promise or the terror of menace; he immediately set out on his march for his promised land of Xaragua, trusting in its soft regions to dissolve every honest principle and virtuous tie of his misguided followers, by a life of indolence and libertinage.

In the meantime the mischievous effects of his intrigues among the caciques became more and more apparent. No sooner had the adelantado left fort Conception than a conspiracy was formed among the natives to surprise it. Guarionex was at the head of this conspiracy, moved by the instigations of Roldan, who had promised him protection and assistance, and led on by the forlorn hope, in this distracted state of the Spanish forces, to relieve his paternal domains from the intolerable domination of usurping strangers. Holding secret communications with his tributary caciques

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\* Herrera, D. 1, L. 3, C. 8.

it was concerted that they should all rise simultaneously upon the soldiery who were quartered in small parties in their villages, and should put them to death; while he with a chosen force should surprise the fortress of Conception in the present weak state of the garrison. As the Indians did not excel in counting, and might make a mistake in the appointed time, the night of the full moon was fixed upon for the insurrection.

One of the principal caciques, however, not being a correct observer of the heavenly bodies, took up arms before the appointed night. He was repulsed by the soldiers quartered in his village, the alarm was given, and the Spaniards were all put upon the alert. The cacique fled to Guarionex for protection, but the chieftain, full of indignation and despair, put him to death upon the spot.

No sooner did the adelantado hear of this fresh conspiracy than he again put himself on the march for the Vega, with a strong body of men. Guarionex did not await his coming. He saw that every attempt was fruitless to shake off these strangers, who had settled like a curse upon his territories. He found their friendship withering and destructive, and he now dreaded their vengeance. Abandoning, therefore, his rightful and beautiful domain, the once happy Vega, he fled with his family and a small band of faithful followers to the mountains of Ciguay. This is a lofty chain, extending along the north side of the island, between the Vega and the sea. The inhabitants were the most robust and hardy tribe of the island, and far more formidable than the mild inhabitants of the plains. It was a part of this tribe which displayed hostility to the Spaniards in the course of the first voyage of Columbus, and in a skirmish with them in the gulf of Samana, the first drop of native blood



had been shed in the new world. The reader may remember the frank and confiding conduct of these people, the day after the skirmish, and the intrepid faith with which their cacique trusted himself on board of the caravel of the admiral, and in the power of the Spaniards. It was to this same cacique, named Mayobanex, that the fugitive chieftain of the Vega now applied for refuge. He came to his residence, at an Indian town, near cape Cabron, about ten leagues west of Isabella, and implored shelter for his wife and children, and his handful of loyal followers. The magnanimous cacique of the mountains received him with open arms. He not only gave an asylum to his family, but he pledged himself to stand by him in his distress, to defend his cause, and share his desperate fortunes\*. Men in civilized life learn magnanimity from precept, but their most generous actions are often rivalled by the deeds of untutored savages, who act only from natural impulse.

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\* Las Casas, Hist. Ind. Cap. 121. MS. P. Martyr, D. 1, L. 5.

## CHAPTER VII.

CAMPAIGN OF THE ADELANTADO IN THE MOUNTAINS OF  
CIGUAY.

1498. AIDED by his mountain ally, and by bands of hardy Ciguayans, Guarionex made several descents into the plain, cutting off straggling parties of the Spaniards, laying waste the villages of the natives who continued in allegiance to them, and destroying the fruits of the earth. The arrival of the adelantado put a stop to these molestations, but he determined to root out so formidable an adversary from the neighbourhood. Shrinking from no danger nor fatigue, and leaving nothing to be done by others which he could do himself, he set forth in the spring with a band of ninety men, a few cavalry, and a body of Indians, to penetrate among the wild fastnesses of the Ciguay mountains.

After passing over a steep defile, rendered almost impracticable for troops by rugged rocks, and the exuberant vegetation, he descended into a beautiful valley or plain, extending along the coast, and embraced by arms of the mountains which advanced toward the sea. His advance into the country was watched by the keen eyes of Indian scouts, who lurked among the rocks and thickets. As the Spaniards were seeking the ford of a river at the entrance of the plain, two of these spies darted from among the bushes on its bank.

One flung himself headlong into the water, and, swimming across the mouth of the river, escaped. The other being taken gave information that six thousand Indians lay in ambush on the opposite shore, waiting to attack them as they crossed.

The adelantado advanced with caution, and, finding a shallow place, entered the river with his troops. They were scarcely midway in the stream, when the savages, hideously painted, and looking more like fiends than men, burst from their concealment. The forest rang with their yells and howlings. They discharged a shower of arrows and lances, by which, notwithstanding the protection of their targets, many of the Spaniards were wounded. The adelantado, however, forced his way across the river, and the Indians took to flight. Some were killed, but their swiftness of foot, their knowledge of the forest, and their dexterity in darting and winding through the most tangled thickets, enabled the greater number to elude the pursuit of the Spaniards, who were encumbered with armour, targets, crossbows and lances.

By the advice of one of his Indian guides, the adelantado pressed forward along the valley, to reach the residence of Mayobanex at Cabron. On the way he had several skirmishes with the natives, who would suddenly rush forth from ambuscades among the bushes, discharge their weapons with furious war-cries, and take refuge again in the fastnesses of their rocks and forests, inaccessible to the Spaniards.

Having taken several prisoners, the adelantado sent one, accompanied by an Indian of a friendly tribe, as a messenger to Mayobanex, demanding the surrender of Guarionex, promising friendship and protection in case of compliance, but threatening, in case of refusal, to lay waste his territory with fire and sword. The cacique listened attentively to the

messenger; when he had finished, "Tell the Spaniards," said he, "that they are bad men, cruel and tyrannical; usurpers of the territories of others, and shedders of innocent blood: I have no desire of the friendship of such men. Guarionex is a good man, he is my friend, he is my guest, he has fled to me for refuge, I have promised to protect him, and I will keep my word."

When the messenger brought this magnanimous reply, or rather defiance, the adelantado saw that nothing was to be gained by friendly overtures. When the success of his expeditions required it he was a stern soldier. He immediately ordered the village in which he had been quartered to be set on fire, and several others in the neighbourhood. He then sent further messengers to Mayobanex warning him that unless he delivered up the fugitive cacique his whole dominions should be laid waste in like manner; and he would see nothing in every direction but the smoke and flames of his burning villages. The unhappy Ciguayans beholding the destruction which threatened to overwhelm them cursed the day in which Guarionex had taken refuge among them. They surrounded their chieftain with clamorous lamentations, urging that the fugitive should be given up for the salvation of the country. The generous cacique was inflexible. He reminded them of the many virtues of Guarionex, and the sacred claims he had on their hospitality. He declared that he was ready to abide all evils rather than it should ever be said Mayobanex had betrayed his guest.

The people retired with sorrowful hearts, and the chieftain summoning Guarionex into his presence, again pledged his word to stand by him and protect him though it should cost him his dominions. He sent no reply to the adelantado, and lest any further messages might be brought to

shake the minds of his subjects, he placed men in ambush, with orders to slay any messengers who might approach. They had not lain in wait long when they beheld two advancing through the forest, one of whom was a captive Ciguayan, the other an Indian ally of the Spaniards. They were both instantly slain. The adelantado was following at no great distance, with only ten foot soldiers and four horsemen. When he found his messengers lying dead in the forest path, transfixed with arrows, he was greatly exasperated, and resolved to deal rigorously with this obstinate tribe. He advanced, therefore, with all his force to Cabron, where Mayobanex and his army were quartered. At his approach the inferior caciques and their adherents, overcome by their terror of the Spaniards, took to flight. When the unfortunate Mayobanex found himself thus deserted he took refuge with his family in a secret part of the mountains. Several of the Ciguayans sought for Guarionex to kill him or deliver him up as a propitiatory offering, but he fled to the heights, where he wandered about alone, in the most savage and desolate places.

The luxuriance of the forests and the ruggedness of the mountains rendered this expedition excessively painful and laborious, and protracted it far beyond the time that the adelantado had contemplated. His men suffered not merely from fatigue but hunger. The natives had all fled to the mountains; their villages remained empty and desolate; all the provisions of the Spaniards consisted of cassava bread and such roots and herbs as their Indian allies could gather for them, with now and then a few utias, taken with the assistance of their dogs. They slept almost always on the ground, in the open air, under the trees, exposed to the heavy dew which falls in this climate. For three months they were

thus scouring the mountains, until almost worn out with toil and hard fare. Many of them had farms in the neighbourhood of fort Conception which required their attention; they therefore entreated permission, since the Indians were terrified and dispersed, to return to their abodes in the Vega.

The adelantado granted many of them passports, and an allowance out of the scanty stock of bread which remained. Retaining only thirty men, he resolved with these to search every den and cavern of the mountains until he should find the two caciques. It was difficult, however, to come upon their traces in such a wilderness. There was no one to give a clew to their retreat. The whole country was abandoned; there were the habitations of men, but not a human being to be seen; or if by chance they caught some wretched Indian stealing forth from the mountains in quest of food, he always professed utter ignorance of the hiding place of the caciques.

It happened one day, however, that several Spaniards, while hunting utias, captured two of the followers of Mayobanex, who were on their way to a distant village in search of bread. They were taken to the adelantado, who compelled them to betray the place of concealment of their chieftain, and to act as guides. Twelve Spaniards volunteered to go in quest of him. Stripping themselves naked, staining and painting their bodies so as to look like Indians, and wrapping their swords in palm-leaves, they were conducted by the guides to the retreat of the unfortunate Mayobanex. They came secretly upon him, and found him surrounded by his wife and children, and a few of his household, totally unsuspecting of danger. Drawing their swords, the Spaniards rushed upon them and made them all prisoners. When these captives were brought to the adelantado,

he gave up all further search after Guarionex, and returned to fort Concepcion.

Among the prisoners thus taken was the sister of Mayobanex. She was the wife of another cacique of the mountains, whose territories had never yet been visited by the Spaniards, and she was reputed to be one of the most beautiful women of the island. Tenderly attached to her brother, she had abandoned the security of her own dominions, and had followed him among rocks and precipices, participating in all his hardships, and comforting him with a woman's sympathy and kindness. When the cacique, her husband, who tenderly loved her, heard of her captivity, he was distracted with grief, and hastening to the adelantado, offered to submit himself and all his possessions to his sway, if his wife might be restored to him. The adelantado accepted his offer of allegiance, and released this Indian beauty, together with several of his subjects whom he had captured. The cacique kept his word; he became a firm and valuable ally of the Spaniards, cultivating large tracts of land, and supplying them with great quantities of bread and other provisions.

Kindness appears never to have been lost upon this gentle people. When this act of clemency reached the Ciguayans, they came in multitudes to the fortress, bringing presents of various kinds, promising allegiance, and imploring the release of Mayobanex and his family. The adelantado granted their prayer in part, releasing the wife and household of the cacique, but still detaining him prisoner, to ensure the fidelity of his subjects.

In the meantime, the unfortunate Guarionex, who had been hiding in the wildest part of the mountains, was driven by hunger to venture down occasionally into the plain in

quest of food. The Ciguayans looking upon him as the cause of their misfortunes, and perhaps hoping by his sacrifice to procure the release of their chieftain, betrayed his haunts to the adelantado. A party was immediately dispatched to secure him. They lay in wait in the path by which he usually returned to the mountains. As the unhappy cacique, after one of his solitary and famished excursions, was returning to his den among the cliffs, he was surprised by the lurking Spaniards, and brought in chains to fort Concepcion. After his repeated insurrections, and the extraordinary zeal and perseverance displayed in his pursuit, Guarionex expected nothing less than death from the vengeance of the adelantado. Don Bartholomew, however, though stern in his policy, was neither vindictive nor cruel in his nature. He considered the tranquillity of the Vega sufficiently secured by the captivity of the cacique; and he ordered him to be detained a prisoner and hostage in the fortress. The Indian hostilities in this important part of the island being thus brought to a conclusion, and precautions taken to prevent their recurrence, Don Bartholomew returned to the city of St. Domingo, where shortly after his arrival he had the joy of receiving his brother the admiral, after nearly two years and six months absence\*.

Such was the active, intrepid and sagacious, but turbulent and disastrous, administration of the adelantado; in which we find evidences of the great capacity, the mental and bodily vigour, of this self-formed and almost self-taught man. He united in a singular degree the sailor, the soldier,

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\* The particulars of this chapter are chiefly from P. Martyr, Decad. 1, Lib. 6; the manuscript history of Las Casas, L. 1, C. 121; and Herrera, Hist. Ind. D. 1, L. 3, C. 8, 9.



and the legislator. Like his brother the admiral, his mind and manners rose immediately to the level of his situation, showing no arrogance nor ostentation, and exercising the sway of sudden and extraordinary powers with the sobriety and moderation of one who had been born to it. He has been accused of severity in his government, but no instance appears of a cruel or wanton abuse of authority. If he was stern towards the factious Spaniards, he was just; the disasters of his administration were not produced by his own rigour, but by the perverse passions of others which called for its exercise; and the admiral, who had more suavity of manners and benevolence of heart, was not more fortunate in conciliating the good will and ensuring the obedience of the colonists. The character of Don Bartholomew does not appear to have been sufficiently appreciated by the world; it is a portrait that has hanged in the shade, but it is worthy of being brought out into the light as a companion to that of his brothers. It is less rich and varied, and amiable and magnanimous, perhaps, in its lineaments; but its traits are bold, generous and heroic, and stamped with iron firmness.

# **LIFE AND VOYAGES**

**OF**

## **CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS.**

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### **BOOK XII.**

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#### **CHAPTER I.**

#### **CONFUSION IN THE ISLAND—PROCEEDINGS OF THE REBELS AT XARAGUA.**

**1498.** COLUMBUS arrived at St. Domingo wearied by a long and arduous voyage, and worn down by infirmities; both mind and body craved repose; but from the time he first launched upon public life, he was doomed never again to taste the sweets of tranquillity. The island of Hispaniola, the favourite child, as it were, of his hopes, was destined to involve him in perpetual troubles, to fetter his fortunes, impede his enterprizes, and fill his latter days with sorrow and repining. What a scene of poverty and suffering had this opulent and lovely island been rendered, by the bad passions of a few despicable men! The wars with the natives, and the seditions of the colonists, had put a stop to the labours of the mines, and all hopes of wealth were at

an end. The horrors of famine had succeeded to those of war. The cultivation of the earth had been generally neglected ; several of the provinces had been desolated during the late troubles ; a great part of the Indians had fled to the mountains, and those who remained had lost all heart to labour, seeing that the produce of their toils was liable to be wrested from them by ruthless strangers. It is true, the great Vega was once more quiet, but it was a forlorn tranquillity. That beautiful region, which but four years before the Spaniards had found so populous and happy, which seemed to shut up in its luxuriant bosom all the sweets of nature, and to exclude all the cares and sorrows of the world, was now a vast scene of wretchedness and repining. Many of those Indian towns, where the Spaniards had been detained by genial hospitality, and almost worshipped as beneficent deities, were now silent and deserted. Some of their late inhabitants were lurking among rocks and caverns ; some were reduced to slavery ; many had perished with hunger, and many had fallen by the sword. It seems almost incredible that so small a number of men, restrained too by well meaning governors, could in so short a space of time have produced such wide spreading miseries. But the principles of evil have a fatal activity. With every exertion, the best of men can do but a moderate amount of good ; but it seems in the power of the most contemptible individual to do incalculable mischief.

The evil passions of the white men, which had inflicted such calamities upon this innocent people, had ensured likewise a merited return of suffering to themselves. In no part was this more truly exemplified than among the inhabitants of Isabella, the most idle, factious, and dissolute of the island. The public works were unfinished ; the gardens

and fields they had begun to cultivate lay neglected ; they had driven the natives from their vicinity, by extortion and cruelty, and had rendered the country around them a solitary wilderness. Too idle to labour, and destitute of any resources with which to occupy their indolence, they quarrelled among themselves, mutinied against their rulers, and wasted their time in alternate riot and despondency. Many of the soldiery quartered about the island, had suffered from ill health during the late troubles, being shut up in Indian villages where they could take no exercise, and obliged to subsist on food to which they could not accustom themselves. Those who had been actively employed, had been worn down by hard service, long marches, and scanty food. Many of them were broken in constitution, and many had perished by disease. There was a universal desire to leave the island, and to escape from the miseries which they had created. Yet this was the favoured and fruitful land to which the eyes of philosophers and poets in Europe were fondly turned, as realizing the pictures of the golden age. So true it is, that the fairest elysium that fancy ever devised, would be turned into a purgatory by the passions of bad men.

One of the first measures of Columbus on his arrival, was to issue a proclamation approving of all the measures of the adelantado, and denouncing Roldan and his associates. That turbulent man had in a manner taken possession of Xaragua, where he had been kindly received by the natives. He had permitted his followers to lead an idle and licentious life among its beautiful scenes, making the surrounding country and its inhabitants subservient to their pleasures and their passions. An event happened previous to their knowledge of the arrival of Columbus, which threw supplies into their hands and strengthened their power. As

they were one day loitering on the seashore, they beheld three caravels at a distance, the sight of which, in this unfrequented part of the ocean, filled them with wonder and alarm. The ships approached the land and came to anchor. The rebels apprehended at first that they were vessels dispatched in pursuit of them. Roldan, however, who was as sagacious as he was bold, surmised that they were ships which had wandered from their course, and been borne to the westward by the currents, and that they must be ignorant of the recent occurrences of the island. Enjoining the utmost secrecy on his men, he went on board, pretending to be stationed in that neighbourhood for the purpose of keeping the natives in obedience, and collecting tribute. His conjectures as to the vessels were correct. They were, in fact, the three caravels which had been detached by Columbus from his squadron at the Canary islands, to bring supplies to the colonies. The captains, being ignorant of the strength of the currents which set through the Caribbean sea, had been carried west far beyond their reckoning, until they had at length wandered to the coast of Xaragua.

Roldan and his followers kept their secret closely for three days. Being considered a man in important trust and authority, the captains did not hesitate to grant all his requests for supplies. He procured swords, lances, crossbows, and various other munitions, while his men, dispersed through the three vessels, were busy among the crews, secretly making partizans, representing the hard life of the colonists at St. Domingo, and the ease and revelry in which they passed their time at Xaragua. Many of the crews had been shipped in compliance with the admiral's ill-judged proposition, to commute criminal punishments into transportation to the colony. They were vagabonds, the refuse of Spanish

towns, and culprits from Spanish dungeons. They were the very men, therefore, to be wrought upon by such representations, and promised on the first opportunity to desert and join the rebels.

It was not until the third day that Alonzo Sanchez de Caravajal, the most intelligent of the three captains, discovered the real character of the dangerous guests whom he had admitted so freely on board of his vessels. It was then too late; the mischief was effected. He and his fellow captains had many earnest conversations with Roldan, endeavouring to persuade him from his dangerous opposition to the regular authority. The certainty that Columbus was actually on his way to the island, with additional forces, and augmented authority, had operated strongly on his mind. He had, as has already been intimated, prepared his friends at St. Domingo to plead his cause with the admiral, assuring him that he had only acted in opposition to the injustice and oppression of the adelantado, but was ready to submit to Columbus on his arrival. Caravajal perceived that the resolution of Roldan, and of several of his principal confederates, was shaken, and flattered himself that, if he were to remain some little time among the rebels, he might succeed in drawing them back to their duty.

Contrary winds rendered it impossible for the ships to work up against the currents to St. Domingo. It was arranged among the captains, therefore, that a large number of the people on board, artificers and others most important to the service of the colony, should proceed to the settlement by land. They were to be conducted by Juan Antonio Colombo, captain of one of the caravels, a relative of the admiral, and zealously devoted to his interests. Arana was to proceed with the ships, when the wind should permit,

and Caravajal volunteered to remain on shore, to endeavour to bring the rebels to their allegiance.

On the following morning, Juan Antonio Colombo landed with forty men, well armed with crossbows, swords and lances, but was astonished to find himself suddenly deserted by all his party excepting eight. The deserters went off in triumph to the rebels, who received with exultation this important reinforcement of kindred spirits. It was in vain that Juan Antonio endeavoured by remonstrances and threats to bring them back to their duty. They were most of them convicted culprits, accustomed to detest order, and to set law at defiance. It was equally in vain that he appealed to Roldan, and reminded him of his professions of loyalty to the government. The latter replied that he had no means of enforcing obedience; his was a mere monastery of observation, where every one was at liberty to adopt the habit of the order. Such was the first of a long train of evils, which sprang from this most ill-judged expedient of peopling a colony with criminals; and thus mingling vice and villany with the fountain-head of its population.

Juan Antonio, grieved and disconcerted, returned on board with the few who remained faithful. Fearing further desertions, the two captains immediately put to sea, leaving Caravajal on shore, to prosecute his attempt at reforming the rebels. It was not without great difficulty and delay that the vessels reached St. Domingo; the ship of Caravajal having struck on a sand-bank, and sustained great injury. By the time of their arrival at their destined port, the greater part of the provisions with which they had been freighted was either exhausted or damaged. Alonzo Sanchez de Caravajal arrived shortly afterwards by land, having been escorted to within six leagues of the place by several

of the insurgents to protect him from the Indians. He had failed in his attempt to persuade the band to immediate submission; but Roldan had promised, that the moment he heard of the arrival of Columbus, he would repair to the neighbourhood of St. Domingo, to be at hand to state his grievances, and the reasons of his past conduct, and to enter into a negociation for the adjustment of all differences. Caravajal brought a letter from him to the admiral to the same purport; and expressed a confident opinion, from all that he observed of the rebels, that they might easily be brought back to their allegiance by an assurance of amnesty\*.

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\* Herrera, D. 1, L. 3, C. 12. Hist. del Almirante, C. 77. Las Casas, L. 1, C. 149, 150.



## CHAPTER II.

NEGOCIATION OF THE ADMIRAL WITH THE REBELS—  
DEPARTURE OF SHIPS FOR SPAIN.

1498. NOTWITHSTANDING the favourable representations of Caravajal, Columbus was greatly troubled by the late events at Xaragua. He saw that the insolence of the rebels, and their confidence in their strength, must be greatly increased by the accession of such a large number of well armed and desperate confederates. The proposition of Roldan, to approach to the neighbourhood of St. Domingo, startled him. He doubted the sincerity of his professions, and apprehended great evils and dangers from so artful, daring and turbulent a leader, with such a rash and devoted crew at his command. The example of this lawless horde, roving at large about the island, and living in loose revel and open profligacy, could not but have a dangerous effect upon the colonists newly arrived; and when they were close at hand, to carry on secret intrigues, and to hold, as it were, a camp of refuge to all malecontents, the loyalty of the whole colony might be sapped and undermined.

Some measures were immediately necessary, to fortify the fidelity of the people against such seductions. He was aware that there was a vehement desire among many to return to Spain; and that an idea had been industriously propagated

by the seditious, that he and his brothers wished to detain the colonists on the island through motives of self-interest. On the 12th of September, therefore, he issued a proclamation, offering free passage, and provisions for the voyage, to all who wished to return to Spain, in five vessels which were nearly ready to put to sea. He hoped by this means to relieve the colony from the idle and disaffected, to weaken the party of Roldan, and to retain none about him but such as were sound-hearted and well disposed to the service of the island.

He wrote at the same time to Miguel Ballester, the stanch and well tried veteran who commanded the fortress of Concepcion, advising him to be upon his guard, as the rebels were coming into his neighbourhood. He empowered him, also, to have an interview with Roldan; to offer him pardon and oblivion of the past on condition of his immediate return to duty; and to invite him to repair to St. Domingo, to have an interview with the admiral, under a solemn, and if required, a written assurance from the latter, of personal safety. Columbus was sincere in his intentions. He was of a benevolent and placable disposition, and singularly free from all vindictive feeling towards the many worthless and wicked men, who heaped sorrow on his head.

Ballester had scarcely received this letter, when the rebels began to arrive at the village of Bonao. This was situated in a delicious valley, or vega, of the same name, a country well peopled and abundant. It was about ten leagues from fort Concepcion, and about twenty from St. Domingo. Here Pedro Requelme, one of the ringleaders of the sedition, had large possessions, and his residence became the headquarters of the rebels. Adrian de Moxica, a man of turbulent and mischievous character, brought his detachment of dis-

solute ruffians to this place of rendezvous. Roldan and others of the conspirators drew together there by different routes.

No sooner did the veteran Miguel Ballester hear of the arrival of Roldan, than he set forth to meet him. Ballester was an old and venerable man, with gray hairs, and a soldier-like demeanour. He was loyal, frank and virtuous, of a serious disposition, and great simplicity of heart\*. He was well chosen as a mediator with rash and profligate men, being calculated to calm their passions by his sobriety, to disarm their petulance by his age, to win their confidence by his artless probity, and to awe their licentiousness by his spotless virtue.

Ballester found Roldan in company with Pedro Requelme, Pedro de Gamiz, and Adrian de Moxica, three of his principal confederates. Flushed with a confidence of his present strength, Roldan treated the proffered pardon with contempt; declaring that he did not come there to treat of peace, but to demand the release of certain Indians, who had been captured unjustifiably, and were about to be shipped to Spain as slaves, notwithstanding that he, in his capacity of alcalde mayor, had pledged his word for their protection. He declared that until these Indians were surrendered to him, he would listen to no terms of compact; throwing out an insolent intimation, at the same time, that he held the admiral and his fortunes in his hand, to make and mar them as he pleased.

The Indians here alluded to were certain subjects of Guarrionex, who had been incited by Roldan to resist the exaction of tribute; and who, under the sanction of his supposed

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\* Las Casas, Hist. Ind. L. 1, C. 153.

authority, had engaged in the insurrections of the Vega. Roldan knew that the enslavement of the Indians was an unpopular feature in the government of the island, especially with the queen, and the artful character of this man is evinced in his giving his opposition to Columbus the air of a vindication of the rights of the suffering islanders. Other demands were made of a highly insolent nature, and the rebels declared that in all further negotiations they would treat with no other intermediate agent than Caravajal, having had proofs of his fairness and impartiality in the course of their late communications with him at Xaragua.

This arrogant reply to his proffer of pardon, was totally different from what the admiral had been led to expect. He was placed in the most embarrassing situation. Every thing around him seemed false and suspicious. He knew that Roldan had friends and secret partizans even among those who professed to remain faithful; and he knew not how far they might have extended their corruptions. A circumstance soon occurred to show the justice of his apprehensions. He ordered the men of St. Domingo to appear under arms, that he might ascertain the force with which he could take the field in case of necessity. A report was immediately circulated that they were to be led to Bonao against the rebels. Not above seventy men appeared under arms, and of these not forty were to be relied upon. One affected to be lame, another ill; some had relations, and others had friends among the followers of Roldan; almost all were disaffected to the service\*.

Columbus saw that a resort to arms would only serve to betray his own weakness, and the power of the rebels, and

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\* Hist. del Almirante, C. 73.

would completely prostrate the dignity and authority of government. It was necessary to temporize, therefore, however humiliating. He had detained the five ships for eighteen days in port, hoping in some way to have put an end to this rebellion, so as to send home favourable accounts of the island to the sovereigns. The provisions of the ships, however, were wasting. The Indian prisoners on board were suffering and perishing. Several of them threw themselves overboard, or were suffocated with heat in the holds of the vessels. He was anxious, also, that as many of the discontented colonists as possible should make sail for Spain, before any commotion should take place.

On the 18th of October, therefore, the ships put to sea\*. Columbus wrote to the sovereigns an account of the rebellion, and of his proffered pardon being refused. As Roldan pretended that it was a mere quarrel between him and the adelantado, of which the admiral was not an impartial judge, the latter entreated that Roldan might be summoned to Spain, where their majesties might be his judges; or that an investigation might take place in presence of Alonzo Sanchez de Caravajal, who was friendly to Roldan, and of Miguel Ballester, as witness on the part of the adelantado.

He attributed in a great measure the troubles of the island to his own long detention in Spain, and the delays thrown in his way by those who had been appointed to assist him; who had retarded the departure of the ships with supplies, until the colony had been reduced to the greatest scarcity. Hence had arisen discontent, murmur, and finally rebellion.

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\* In one of these ships sailed the father of the venerable historian Las Casas, from whom he derived many of those facts of his history. Las Casas, L. 1, C. 153.

He entreated their majesties in the most pressing manner, that the affairs of the colony might not be neglected; and that those at Seville who had charge of its concerns, might be instructed, at least, not to devise impediments instead of assistance. He alluded to his chastisement of the contemptible Ximeno Bevesco, the insolent minion of Fonseca, and entreated that neither that nor any other circumstance might be allowed to prejudice him in the royal favour, through the misrepresentations of designing men. He assured them that the natural resources of the island required nothing but good management to supply all the wants of the colonists; but that the latter were indolent and profligate. He proposed to send home by every ship, as in the present instance, a number of the discontented and worthless, to be replaced by sober and industrious men. He begged also that ecclesiastics might be sent out for the instruction and conversion of the Indians; and what was equally necessary, for the reformation of the dissolute Spaniards. He required also a man learned and experienced in the law, to officiate as judge over the island, together with several officers of the royal revenue. Nothing could surpass the soundness and policy of these suggestions; but unfortunately, one clause marred the moral beauty of this excellent letter. He requested that for two years longer the Spaniards might be permitted to employ the Indians as slaves; only making use of such, however, as were captured in wars and insurrections. Columbus had the usages of the age in excuse for this suggestion; but it is at variance with his usual benignity of feeling, and his paternal conduct towards these unfortunate people.

At the same time, he wrote another letter, giving an account of his recent voyage, accompanied by a chart, and by

specimens of the gold, and particularly of the pearls found in the gulf of Paria. He called especial attention to the latter, as being the first specimens of pearls found in the new world. It was in this letter that he described the newly discovered continent in such enthusiastic terms; as the most favoured part of the east, the source of inexhaustible treasures, the supposed seat of the terrestrial paradise; and he promised to prosecute the discovery of its glorious realms, with the three remaining ships, as soon as the affairs of the island should permit.

By this opportunity, Roldan and his friends likewise sent letters to Spain, endeavouring to justify their rebellion, by charging Columbus and his brothers with oppression and injustice, and painting their whole conduct in the blackest colours. It would naturally be supposed that the representations of such men would have little weight in the balance against the tried merits and exalted services of Columbus; but they had numerous friends and relatives in Spain, they had the popular prejudice on their side, and there were designing persons in the confidence of the sovereigns ready to advocate their cause. Columbus, to use his own simple but affecting words, was "absent, envied, and a stranger\*."

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\* Las Casas, Hist. Ind. L. 1, C. 157.

## CHAPTER III.

## ARRANGEMENT WITH THE REBELS.

1498. THE ships being dispatched, Columbus resumed his negotiation with the rebels. He was determined to put an end to this sedition at any sacrifice ; for until it should be set at rest, not only the affairs of the island would remain in a distracted and ruinous state, but all his splendid plans of discovery would be interrupted. His ships lay idle in the harbour, though a region of apparently boundless wealth was to be explored. He had intended to send his brother on the discovery, but the active and military spirit of the adelantado rendered his presence indispensable, in case the rebels should come to open violence. Such were the difficulties which he had to encounter at every step of his generous and magnanimous enterprizes ; impeded at one time by the insidious intrigues of crafty men in place, and checked at another by the insolent turbulence of a handful of ruffians.

Columbus held earnest consultations with the most important persons about him. He found that much of the popular discontent was attributed to the strict rule of his brother, who was accused of dealing out justice with a rigorous hand. Las Casas, however, who saw all the testimony collected from various sources, with respect to the conduct of the adelantado,



acquits him of all charge of the kind, and affirms that with respect to Roldan in particular, he had exerted great forbearance. Columbus, by the advice of his counsellors, and by the suggestions of his own forgiving heart, was resolved to try the alternative of extreme lenity. He wrote a letter to Roldan, dated the 20th of October, couched in the most conciliating terms, calling to mind past kindnesses, and expressing the affliction he had suffered at finding such a feud existing between him and the adelantado. He entreated him, for the common good, and for the sake of his own reputation, which stood well with the sovereigns, not to persist in his present insubordination. He again repeated his assurance, that he and his companions might come to him, under the faith of his word, for the inviolability of their persons.

There was a difficulty as to who should be the bearer of this letter. The rebels had declared that they would receive no one as mediator but Alonzo Sanchez de Caravajal. Strong doubts, however, existed in the minds of those about Columbus as to the integrity of that officer. They observed that he had suffered Roldan to remain two days on board of his caravel at Xaragua; had furnished him with weapons and stores; had neglected to detain him on board when he knew him to be a rebel; had not exerted himself to retake the deserters; had been escorted on his way to St. Domingo by the rebels; and had sent refreshments to them at Bonao. It was alleged, moreover, that he had given himself out as a colleague of Columbus, appointed by government to have a watch and control over his conduct. It was suggested, that in advising the rebels to approach St. Domingo, he had intended, in case the admiral did not arrive, to unite his pretended authority as colleague, to that of Roldan as chief.

judge, and to seize upon the reins of government. Finally, the desire of the rebels to have him sent to them as an agent, was cited as a proof that he was to join them as a leader, and that the standard of rebellion was to be hoisted at Bonao\*. These circumstances for some time perplexed the mind of Columbus; but he reflected that Caravajal, as far as he had had an opportunity of observing his conduct, had behaved like a man of honour and integrity; most of the circumstances alleged against him admitted of a construction in his favour; the rest were mere rumours; and he had unfortunately experienced, in his own case, how easily the fairest actions and the fairest characters may be falsified by rumour. He discarded at once all suspicion, and determined to confide implicitly in Caravajal; nor had he ever any reason to repent of his confidence.

The admiral had scarcely dispatched this letter, when he received one from the leaders of the rebels, which had been written several days previously. In this, they not merely vindicated themselves from the charge of rebellion, but claimed great merit, as having dissuaded their followers from a resolution to kill the adelantado, in revenge for his oppressions; and had prevailed upon them to wait patiently for redress from the admiral. A month had elapsed since his arrival, during which they had waited anxiously for his orders; but he had manifested nothing but violent irritation against them, notwithstanding the great evils which they had prevented. They pretended, therefore, that their honour and safety required that they should withdraw from his service, and they accordingly demanded their discharge. This letter was dated from Bonao, the 17th of October, and sign-

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\* Hist del Almirante, C. 78.

ed by Francisco Roldan, Adrian de Moxica, Pedro de Gamiz, and Diego de Escobart.

In the meantime, Caravajal arrived at Bonao, accompanied by Miguel Ballester. They found the rebels full of arrogance and presumption. The conciliating letter of the admiral, however, enforced by the earnest persuasions of Caravajal, and the virtuous admonitions of the veteran Ballester, had a favourable effect on several of the leaders, who had more intellect than their brutal followers. Roldan, Gamiz, Escobar, and two or three others were disposed to go to the admiral. They had actually mounted their horses for the purpose, when they were detained by the clamorous opposition of their men. These were too infatuated with their idle licentious mode of life, to relish the idea of a return to labour and discipline. They insisted that it was a matter which concerned them all; whatever arrangement was to be made, therefore, should be made in public in writing, and subject to their approbation or dissent. A day or two elapsed before this clamour could be appeased. Roldan then wrote to the admiral, that his followers objected to his coming unless a written assurance or passport were sent, protecting the persons of himself and such as should accompany him. Miguel Ballester wrote at the same time to the admiral, a letter of cautious and earnest counsel, urging him to agree to whatever terms the rebels might demand. He represented their forces as continually augmenting, and that the soldiers of his garrison were daily deserting to them. He gave it as his opinion, that unless some compromise were speedily effected, and the rebels shipped off to Spain, not merely the authority, but even the person of the admiral, would be in danger; for though the hidalgos, and the im-

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\* Hist. del Almirante, C. 79. Herrera, D. 1, L. 3, C. 13.

mediate officers and servants of Columbus, would doubtless die in his service, yet he feared that the common people were but little to be depended upon\*.

Columbus felt the increasing urgency of the case, and immediately sent the required passport. Roldan came to St. Domingo, but from his conduct it appeared as if he sought rather to make partisans, and gain deserters, than to arrange any terms of reconciliation. He had several conversations with the admiral, and several letters passed between them. He made many complaints, and numerous demands. Columbus made large concessions†, but some of the pretensions were too arrogant to be admitted. Nothing definite was arranged. Roldan departed, under pretext of conferring with his people, promising to send his terms in writing. The admiral sent his major domo, Diego de Salamanca, to treat in his behalf‡.

On the 6th of November, Roldan wrote a letter from Bonao, containing his terms, and requested that a reply might be sent to him to Conception, as scarcity of provisions obliged him to leave Bonao. He added that he should wait for a reply until the following Monday (the 11th.) There was an insolent menace implied in this note, accompanied as it was by the most insolent demands. The admiral found it impossible to comply with the latter, but to manifest his lenient disposition, and to take from the rebels all plea of rigour, he had a proclamation affixed for thirty days to the gate of the fortress; promising full indulgence, and complete oblivion of the past, to Roldan and his followers, or to

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\* Las Casas, Hist. Ind. L. 1, C. 153.

† Idem, C. 188.

‡ Hist. del Almirante, C. 79.

any of them who should return to the service of the crown, and present themselves before the admiral within the course of a month, and free conveyance for all such as wished to return to Spain : but threatening to execute justice upon those who should not appear within the limited time. A copy of this paper he sent to Roldan by Caravajal, with a letter, stating the impossibility of a compliance with his terms : but offering to agree to any compact that should be drawn up with the approbation of Caravajal and Salamanca.

When Caravajal arrived he found the veteran Ballester actually besieged in his fortress of Concepcion by Roldan, under pretext of claiming, in his official character of alcalde mayor, a culprit who had taken refuge there from justice. He had cut off the supply of water from the fort, by way of distressing it into a surrender. When Caravajal posted up the proclamation of the admiral, on the gate of the fortress, the rebels scoffed at the proffered amnesty ; saying that, in a little while they would oblige the admiral to ask the same at their hands. The earnest intercessions of Caravajal, however, brought the leaders at length to reflection, and through his mediation articles of capitulation were drawn up. By these it was agreed that Roldan and his followers should embark for Spain, from the port of Xaragua, in two ships, which should be fitted out and victualled within fifty days ; that they should each receive from the admiral a certificate of good conduct, and an order for the amount of their pay, up to the actual date. That slaves should be given to them, as had been given to others, in consideration of services performed ; and as several of their company had wives, natives of the island, who were pregnant, or had lately been delivered, that they might take them with them, if willing to go, in place of the slaves. That satisfaction should be made

for property of some of the company which had been sequestered; and for live stock which had belonged to Francisco Roldan. There were other conditions providing for the security of their persons, and it was stipulated that if no reply were received to these terms within eight days, the whole should be void\*.

This agreement was signed by Roldan and his companions at fort Conception, on the 16th of November, and by the admiral at St. Domingo on the 21st. At the same time he proclaimed a further act of grace, permitting such as chose to remain in the island either to come to St. Domingo, and enter into the royal service, or to hold lands in any part of the island. They preferred, however, to follow the fortunes of Roldan, who departed with his band for Xaragua, to await the arrival of the ships, accompanied by Miguel Ballester, sent by the admiral to superintend the preparations for their embarkation.

It was a grievous trial to the spirit of Columbus, to see his projected enterprize to Terra Firma impeded by such contemptible obstacles, and that the ships which should have borne his brother to explore that newly found continent, should be devoted to the use of this turbulent and worthless rabble. He consoled himself, however, with the reflection, that all the mischief which had so long been lurking in the island, would thus be at once shipped off, and that thenceforth every thing would be restored to order and tranquillity. He ordered every exertion to be made, therefore, to get the ships in readiness to be sent round to Xaragua; but the scarcity of sea-stores, and the difficulty of completing the arrangements for such a voyage, in the disordered state of

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\* Hist del Almirante, C. 80.

the colony, delayed their departure far beyond the stipulated time. Feeling that he had been compelled to a kind of deception towards the sovereigns, in the certificate of good conduct which he had given to Roldan and his followers, Columbus wrote a letter to them, informing them of the real character and conduct of those delinquents. That they had resisted authority, prevented the Indians from paying tribute, pillaged the island, carried off large quantities of gold, and the daughters of several of the caciques. That the certificate of good conduct which he had given them, had been in conformity to the advice of the principal persons about him, and wrung from him by the exigency of the case, the whole island being threatened with ruin by their rebellion. He advised, therefore, that they should be seized, and their slaves and treasure taken from them, until their conduct could be properly investigated. This letter he intrusted to a confidential person, who was to go in one of the ships\*. The rebels having left the neighbourhood, and the affairs of St. Domingo being in a state of security, Columbus put his brother Don Diego in temporary command, and departed with the adelantado on a tour to visit the various posts, and to restore the island to order.

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\* Herrera, *Hist. Ind.* D. 1, I. 3, C. 16.

## CHAPTER IV.

## ANOTHER MUTINY OF THE REBELS; AND SECOND ARRANGEMENT WITH THEM.

1499. SEVERAL months were consumed by Columbus and the adelantado in their tour through the island. Every thing had fallen into confusion during the late troubles. The mines were abandoned; the farms lay neglected; the flocks and herds which were to be kept for breeding, were scattered or destroyed; the caciques had ceased to pay their tribute; every thing required to be rearranged. Still, Columbus flattered himself, now that the island was relieved from the evil spirits which had lately roamed about it, that every thing, by strenuous exertion, would soon be restored to prosperous condition. His little intervals of calm, however, were always sure to be followed by a more violent storm. While he was soothing himself with the idea that Roldan and his band were tossing on the high seas, on their way to Spain, he learnt, to his infinite disquiet, that the voyage was interrupted, and that the rebels had broken out into new seditions.

The two caravels had sailed from St. Domingo for Xaragua about the end of February; but encountering a violent storm, they had been obliged to put into one of the harbours of the island, where they were detained until the end of



**March.** One was so disabled as to be compelled to return to St. Domingo. Another vessel was dispatched to supply its place, in which the indefatigable Caravajal set sail, to expedite the embarkation of the rebels. It was eleven days in making the voyage, and found the other caravel at Xaragua.

In the meantime, the followers of Roldan had changed their minds, and refused to embark; either fearing to return to Spain, or loth to abandon their present unrestrained and dissolute mode of life. They pretended, as usual, to throw all the blame on Columbus; affirming that he had purposely delayed the ships far beyond the time stipulated in their capitulations; that he had sent them in a state not seaworthy, and short of provisions; with many other charges, artfully founded on circumstances over which they knew the admiral could have no control.

Caravajal made a formal protest before a notary who had accompanied him; and, finding that the ships were suffering great injury from the worms, and their provisions failing, he sent them back to St. Domingo, and set out on his return by land. Roldan mounted his horse to accompany him a little distance. He was evidently disturbed in mind. He feared to return to Spain, yet was shrewd enough to know that his present situation, at the head of a band of dissolute men, acting in defiance of authority, had no security in it, and must eventually lead to his destruction. What stronger tie had he upon the fidelity of these men than all the sacred obligations which they had violated? After riding thoughtfully for some distance, he paused, and requested some particular conversation with Caravajal before they parted. They alighted under the shade of a tree. Here Roldan made further professions of the loyalty of his intentions, and finally

declared, that if the admiral would once more send him a written security for his person, with the guarantee also of the principal persons about him, he would come to treat with him, and trusted that the whole matter would be arranged, on terms satisfactory to both parties. This offer, however, he added, must be kept secret from his followers.

Caravajal was overjoyed at this prospect of a final arrangement, and made all haste to communicate the request of Roldan to the admiral. The latter immediately forwarded the required passport, or security, sealed with the royal seal, accompanied by a letter written in amicable terms, exhorting him to quiet obedience to the authority of the sovereigns. Several of the principal persons, also, who were with the admiral, wrote, at his request, a letter of security to Roldan; pledging themselves for the safety of himself and his followers during the negotiation, provided they did nothing hostile to the royal authority, or its representative.

In the midst of his perplexities, while Columbus, with the most unwearied assiduity and loyal zeal, was endeavouring to bring the island back to its obedience, and to promote the interests of his sovereigns, he received a letter from Spain, in reply to the earnest representations which he had made, in the preceding autumn, of the distracted state of the colony, and the outrages of these lawless men, and prayers for royal countenance and support under his difficulties. The letter was written by his invidious enemy, the bishop Fonseca, superintendant of Indian affairs. It informed him that the accounts he had transmitted to Spain of the alleged insurrection of Roldan had been received, but that this matter must be suffered to remain in suspense, as the sovereigns would investigate and remedy it presently\*.

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\* Herrera, Decad. 1, L. 3, C. 16.

This cold reply to his earnest representations, had the most disheartening effect upon Columbus. He saw that his complaints had little weight with the government; that the misrepresentations of his enemies were prejudicing him with the sovereigns; and he anticipated redoubled insolence on the part of the rebels, when they should discover the little influence he possessed in Spain. Full of devotion, however, to the success of his undertakings, and of fidelity to the interests of the sovereigns, he resolved to spare no personal sacrifices of comfort or dignity, but at any cost to appease the troubles of the island. Eager to expedite the negotiation with Roldan, therefore, he sailed, in the latter part of August, with two caravels, to the port of Azua, to the west of St. Domingo, and much nearer to Xaragua. He was accompanied by several of the most important personages of the colony. Roldan repaired thither likewise, with the turbulent Adrian de Moxica, and a number of his band. The concessions he had already received from the admiral had increased his hardihood, and he had doubtless received intelligence of the cold manner in which the complaints of the admiral had been received in Spain. He conducted himself more like a conqueror exacting triumphant terms, than a delinquent seeking to procure pardon by atonement.

He came on board of the caravel, and, with his usual effrontery, propounded the preliminary terms upon which he and his companions were disposed to negotiate.

First, that he should be permitted to send several of his company, to the number of fifteen, to Spain, in the vessels which were at St. Domingo. Secondly, that those who remained should have lands granted them to cultivate, in place of royal pay. Thirdly, that it should be proclaimed, that every thing done by Roldan and his party, had been caused by false testimony, and the machinations of persons who

desired to injure them, and who were disaffected to the royal service. Fourthly, that Roldan should be reinstated in his office of *alcalde mayor*, or chief judge\*.

These were hard and insolent conditions to commence with, but they were accorded. Roldan then went on shore, and communicated them to his companions. For two days the insurgents held a consultation among themselves, at the end of which they sent their capitulations, drawn up in form, and couched in arrogant language, including all the stipulations granted at fort Conception, with those recently demanded by Roldan, and concluding with one more insolent than all the rest: namely, that if the admiral should fail in the fulfilment of any of these articles, they should have a right to assemble together, and to compel his performance of them by force, or by any other means they might think proper†. Thus the conspirators were not only seeking to obtain exculpation of the past, but a pretext for the future, in case they should again rise in rebellion.

The mind grows wearied and impatient with recording, and the heart of the generous reader must burn with indignation at perusing, this protracted and ineffectual struggle of a man of the exalted merits and matchless services of Columbus in the toils of such contemptible miscreants. Surrounded by doubt and danger; a foreigner among a jealous people; an unpopular commander in a mutinous island; distrusted and slighted by the government he was seeking to serve, and creating suspicion by his very services, he knew not where to look for faithful advice, or efficient aid, or candid judgment. He found, as it were, the

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\* Herrera, D. 1, L. 3, C. 16.

† Idem. Hist. del Almirante, C. 83.

very ground on which he stood giving way under him. He understood that seditious conversations began to be held among his own people. They saw the impunity with which the rebels had rioted in the possession of one of the finest parts of the island; they now began to talk among themselves of following their example; of abandoning the standard of the admiral, and seizing upon the province of Higüey, at the eastern extremity of the island, which was said to contain valuable mines of gold.

Thus critically situated, disregarding every consideration of personal pride and dignity, and determined at any individual sacrifice to secure the interests of an ungrateful crown, Columbus forced himself to sign this most humiliating capitulation. He trusted that afterwards, when he could gain quiet access to the royal ear, he would be able to convince the king and queen that it had been compulsory, and forced from him by the extraordinary difficulties in which he had been placed, and the imminent perils of the colony. Before signing it, however, he inserted a stipulation, that the commands of the sovereigns, of himself, and of the justices appointed by him, should be punctually obeyed\*.

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\* Herrera, Hist. Ind. D. 1, L. 3, C. 16.

## CHAPTER V.

## GRANTS MADE TO ROLDAN AND HIS FOLLOWERS—DEPARTURE OF SEVERAL OF THE REBELS FOR SPAIN.

1499. WHEN Roldan resumed his office of *alcalde mayor*, or chief judge, he displayed all the arrogance to be expected from one who had bolstered himself into power by profligate means. While at the city of St. Domingo, he was always surrounded by his faction, communed only with the dissolute and disaffected, and having all the turbulent and desperate men of the community at his beck, he was enabled to intimidate the quiet and loyal by his frowns. He bore an impudent front against the authority even of Columbus himself, discharging from office one Rodrigo Perez, a lieutenant of the admiral, declaring that no one should bear a staff of office in the island but such as he appointed\*.

Columbus had a difficult and painful task to bear with the insolence of this man, and of the shameless rabble that returned, under his auspices, to the settlements. He tacitly permitted many abuses, endeavouring by mildness and indulgence to allay the jealousies and prejudices which had been awakened against him, and by various concessions to bribe, as it were, the factious to the performance of their duty. To such of the colonists generally as preferred to

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\* Herrera, *Hist. Ind. Decad.* 1, L. 3, C. 16.

remain in the island, he offered a choice either of royal pay, or of portions of lands, with a number of Indians, some free, others as slaves, to assist in the cultivation. The latter was generally preferred; and grants were made out, in which he endeavoured, as much as possible, to combine the benefit of the individual with the interests of the colony.

Roldan presented a memorial signed by one hundred and two of his late followers, demanding grants of land and licenses to settle, and choosing Xaragua for their place of abode. The admiral feared to trust such a numerous body of factious partisans together in so remote a province, lest they should foment some new rebellion.

He contrived, therefore, to distribute them in various parts of the island; some at Bonao, who gave origin to the town of that name; others on the banks of the Rio Verde, or Green River, in the Vega; others about six leagues from thence at St. Jago. He assigned to them liberal portions of land, and numerous Indian slaves, taken in the wars; he made an arrangement, also, by which the caciques in their vicinity, in place of paying tribute, should furnish parties of their subjects, free Indians, to assist the colonists in the cultivation of their lands: a kind of feudal service, which was the origin of the repartimientos or distributions of the free Indians among the colonists, afterwards generally adopted, but shamefully abused throughout the Spanish colonies, a source of intolerable hardships and oppressions to the unhappy natives, and which greatly contributed to exterminate them from the island of Hispaniola\*. Columbus considered the island in the light of a conquered country, and arrogated to himself all the rights of a conqueror, in the name of the sovereigns for whom he fought. Of course all his companions in the

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\* Herrera, D. 1, L. 3, C. 16.

enterprize were entitled to take part in the acquired territory, and to establish themselves there as feudal lords, reducing the natives to the condition of villains or vassals\*. This was an arrangement widely different from his original intentions; having been disposed to treat the natives with amity and kindness, as peaceful subjects of the crown. But all his plans had been subverted by the violence and licentiousness of others, and his present measures appear to have been forced upon him by the exigency of the times. As a kind of roving police, to restore the island to order, he appointed a captain with an armed band, with orders to range the provinces, to oblige the Indians to attend to the payment of their tributes, to watch over the conduct of the colonists, and to check the least appearance of mutiny or insurrection†.

Having sought and obtained such ample provisions for his followers, Roldan was not more slow or modest in making demands for himself. He claimed certain lands in the vicinity of Isabella, as having belonged to him before his rebellion; also, a royal farm, devoted to the rearing of poultry, situated in the Vega, and called La Esperanza. These the admiral granted to him, with permission to employ in the cultivation of the farm the subjects of the cacique whose ears had been cut off by Alonzo de Ojeda, in his first military expedition into the Vega. Roldan received also grants of land in Xaragua, and a variety of live stock from the cattle and other animals belonging to the crown. These grants were made to him provisionally, until the pleasure of the sovereigns should be known‡; but Columbus yet trusted

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\* Muñoz, Hist. N. Muudo, L. 6, § 50.

† Hist. del Almirante, C. 84.

‡ Herrera, D. 1, L. 3, C. 16.



that, when their majesties understood the seditions and violences by which these concessions had been extorted from him, the ringleaders of the rebels would not merely be stripped of their ill-gotten possessions, but would receive that punishment which their offences deserved.

Roldan having now enriched himself beyond his hopes, requested permission of Columbus to visit his lands. This was granted with great reluctance. He immediately departed for the Vega, and stopping at Bonao, his late headquarters, he made Pedro Requelme, one of his most active confederates, alcalde, or judge of the place, with the power of arresting all delinquents, and sending them prisoners to the fortress of Conception, where he reserved to himself the right of sentencing them. This appointment gave great displeasure to Columbus, being an assumption of powers not vested in the office of Roldan, who had no right to create inferior alcaldes. Other circumstances created doubts in his mind of further designs of the late insurgents. Pedro Requelme, under pretext of building a house for his cattle, began to erect a strong edifice on a hill, advantageously posted in Bonao, and capable of being made into a formidable fortress. This, it was whispered, was done in concert with Roldan, by way of securing a strong hold in which they might fortify themselves in case of need. Being in the neighbourhood of the Vega, where so many of their late partisans were settled, it would have formed a dangerous rallying place for any new sedition. The designs of Requelme were suspected, and his proceedings opposed by Pedro de Arana, a loyal and honourable man, who was on the spot. Representations were made by both parties to the admiral, who, filled with uneasiness at this suspicious mea-

sure on the part of Requelme, prohibited him from proceeding with the construction of his edifice\*.

Columbus had prepared to return with his brother Don Bartholomew to Spain, where he felt that his presence was of the utmost importance to place the late events of the island in a proper light. He had experienced the inefficacy of letters of explanation, which were liable to be counteracted by the misrepresentations of malevolent enemies. The island, however, was still in a feverish state. He was not well assured of the fidelity of the late rebels, though so dearly purchased; there was rumour also of a threatened descent into the Vega, by the mountain tribes of Ciguay, to attempt the rescue of their captive cacique, Mayobanex, who was still detained a prisoner in the fortress of Concepcion. Tidings also were brought from the western parts of the island, that four strange ships had arrived upon the coast under suspicious appearances. These circumstances obliged Columbus to postpone his departure for the present, and held him involved in the entanglements of this favourite but fatal island.

The two caravels were dispatched for Spain in the beginning of October, taking such of the colonists as chose to return, and among them a number belonging to the party of Roldan. Some of those took with them three slaves, others two, and others one, and some of them carried away the daughters of caciques, whom they had beguiled from their families and homes. At these abuses, as at many others which equally grieved his spirit, the admiral was obliged

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\* Herrera, D. 1, L. 3, C. 16. Hist. del Almirante, Cap. 83 and 84.

to connive. He was conscious, at the same time, that he was sending home a reinforcement of enemies and false witnesses, to defame his character, and traduce his conduct, but he had no alternative. To counteract, as much as possible, their misrepresentations, he sent by the same caravel the loyal and upright veteran Miguel Ballester, together with Garcia de Barrantes, empowered to attend to his affairs at court, and furnished with the written processes which had been taken relative to the conduct of Roldan and his accomplices. He wrote at the same time to the sovereigns, entreating them to inquire into the truth of the late transactions, and to act as they thought best. He stated his opinion that the capitulations which he had signed with the rebels were null and void, for various reasons. That they had been extorted from him by violence, and at sea, where he did not exercise the office of viceroy; that there had been two processes relative to the insurrection, and the insurgents having been condemned as traitors, it was not in the power of the admiral to absolve them from their criminality; that the capitulations treated of matters touching the royal revenue, over which he had no control without the intervention of the proper officers; and that Francisco Roldan and his companions, on leaving Spain, had taken an oath to be faithful to the sovereigns, and to the admiral in their name. For these and similar reasons, some just, others rather sophistical, he urged their majesties not to consider themselves bound to ratify the compulsory terms which he had ceded to these profligate men, but to inquire into their offences and treat them accordingly\*.

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\* Herrera, D. 1, L. 3, C. 16.

He repeated the request made in a former letter, that a learned man might be sent out as judge to administer the laws in the island, since he himself had been charged with rigour, although conscious of having always observed a guarded clemency. He requested also that discreet persons should be sent out to form a council, and others for certain fiscal employments; entreating, however, that care should be taken in all these appointments, that their powers should be so limited and defined, as not to interfere with his own dignity and privileges. He bore strongly on this point; for he felt that his prerogatives had, on former occasions, been grievously invaded. He observed that he might be mistaken, but it appeared to him that princes ought to show much countenance to their governors; for without the royal favour to give them strength and consequence, every thing went to ruin under their command. A sound maxim forced from the admiral by his recent experience, in which much of his own perplexities and the triumph of the rebels had been caused by the distrust of the crown, and its inattention to his complaints.

Finding age and infirmity creeping upon him, and his health being much impaired by his last voyage, Columbus began to think of his son Diego, as an active coadjutor, to share with him in the toils and cares of his station, and who, being destined as his successor, might gain experience under his eye, for the future discharge of his high duties. Diego was still serving as a page at court, but was grown to man's estate, and capable of entering into the important concerns of life; Columbus prayed, therefore, that he might be sent out to assist him, as he felt himself much broken and infirm\*.

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\* Herrera, D. 1, L. 3, C. 16.

## CHAPTER VI.

## ARRIVAL OF OJEDA WITH A SQUADRON AT THE WESTERN PART OF THE ISLAND.—ROLDAN SENT TO MEET HIM.

1499. AMONG the causes which induced Columbus to postpone his departure for Spain, has been mentioned the arrival of four ships at the western part of the island. These had anchored, on the 5th of September, in a harbour a little below Jacquemel, apparently with the design of cutting dye-woods, which abound in that neighbourhood, and of carrying off the natives for slaves. Further reports informed him that these ships were commanded by Alonso de Ojeda, the same hot-headed and bold-hearted cavalier, who had distinguished himself on various occasions in the previous voyages of discovery, and particularly in the capture of the cacique Caonabo. Knowing the daring and adventurous spirit of this man, Columbus felt much disturbed at his visiting the island in this clandestine manner, on what appeared to be little better than a freebooting expedition. To call him to account, and to oppose his aggressions, however, required an agent of spirit and address. No one seemed better fitted for the purpose than Roldan. He was as daring as Ojeda, and of a more crafty character. An expedition of the kind would occupy the attention of himself and his partisans, and divert them from any schemes of mis-

chief. The large concessions recently made to them would he trusted secure their present fidelity, rendering it more profitable for them to be loyal than rebellious.

Roldan gladly undertook the enterprize. He had nothing further to gain by sedition; and he was anxious to secure his ill-gotten possessions and offices, by public services which should atone for his past offences. He was a vain, as well as a bustling man, and took a pride in acquitting himself well in an expedition which called for both courage and shrewdness. Departing from St. Domingo with two caravels, he arrived on the 29th of September within two leagues of the harbour where the ships of Ojeda were anchored. Here he landed with five and twenty resolute followers, well armed, and accustomed to range the forests. He sent five scouts to reconnoitre. They brought him word that Ojeda was on shore, several leagues distant from his ships, with only fifteen men, who were employed in making cassava bread in an Indian village. Roldan threw himself between Ojeda and his ships, thinking to take him by surprise. Ojeda, however, was apprised of his approach by the Indians, with whom the very name of Roldan inspired terror, from his late excesses in Xaragua. Ojeda saw his danger; he supposed Roldan had been sent in pursuit of him, and he found himself cut off from any retreat to his ships. With his usual intrepidity, he immediately presented himself before Roldan, attended merely by half a dozen followers. The latter craftily began by conversing on general topics. He then inquired into his motives for landing on the island, particularly on that remote and lonely part, without first reporting himself to the admiral. Ojeda replied that he had been on a voyage of discovery, and had put in there in distress, to repair his ships and procure provisions. Roldan then demand-

ed, in the name of the government, a sight of the license under which he sailed. Ojeda, who knew the resolute character of the man he had to deal with, restrained his natural impetuosity, and replied, that his papers were on board of his ship. He declared his intention, on his departure from thence, to go to St. Domingo, and pay his homage to the admiral, having many things to tell him which were for his private ear. He intimated to Roldan that the admiral had completely fallen into disgrace at court; that there was a talk of taking from him his command; and that the queen his patroness was ill beyond all hopes of a recovery. This intimation it is presumed was referred to by Roldan in his dispatches to the admiral, wherein he mentioned that certain things had been communicated to him by Ojeda, which he did not think it safe to confide to a letter.

Roldan now repaired to the ships. He found several persons on board with whom he was acquainted, and who had already been in Hispaniola. They confirmed the truth of what Ojeda had said; and showed a license signed by the bishop Fonseca, as superintendant of the affairs of the Indias, authorizing him to sail on a voyage of discovery\*.

It appeared, from the reports of Ojeda and his followers, that the glowing accounts sent home by Columbus of his late discoveries on the coast of Paria; his magnificent speculations with respect to the riches of the newly found country; and the specimens of pearls which he had transmitted to the sovereigns, had inflamed the cupidity of various adventurers. Ojeda happened to be at that time in Spain. He was a favourite of the bishop Fonseca, and obtained a

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\* Herrera, D. 1, L. 4, C. 3.

sight of the letter written by the admiral to the sovereigns, and the charts and maps of his route by which it was accompanied. Ojeda knew Columbus to be entangled by the seditions of Hispaniola; he found, by his conversations with Fonseca, and other of the admiral's enemies, that strong doubts and jealousies existed in the mind of the king, with respect to his conduct; and that his approaching downfall was confidently predicted. The idea struck Ojeda, to take advantage of these circumstances, and, by a private enterprize, to be the first in gathering the wealth of these newly discovered regions. He communicated his project to his patron Fonseca. The latter was but too ready to do any thing that might defeat the plans and obscure the glory of Columbus; and it may be added, that he always showed himself more disposed to patronize mercenary adventurers, than upright and high-minded discoverers. He granted Ojeda every facility, furnishing him with copies of the papers and charts of Columbus, by which to govern himself in his voyage, and granting him a letter of license signed with his own name, though not with that of the sovereigns. In this, it was stipulated that he should not touch at any land belonging to the king of Portugal, nor any that had been discovered by Columbus prior to 1495. The last provision shows the perfidious artifice of Fonseca, as it left Paria and the pearl islands free to the visits of Ojeda; they having been discovered by Columbus subsequent to the designated year. The ships were to be fitted out at the charges of the adventurers, and certain proportions of the products of the voyage were to be rendered to the crown.

Under this license, Ojeda fitted out four ships at Seville, assisted by many eager and wealthy speculators. Among the number was the celebrated Americo Vesputio, a Floren-



tine merchant, who was considered well acquainted with geography and navigation. The principal pilot of the expedition was Juan de la Cosa, a mariner of great repute, a disciple of the admiral, whom he had accompanied in his first voyage of discovery, and in that along the southern coast of Cuba, and round the island of Jamaica. There were several also of the mariners, and Bartholomew Roldan, a distinguished pilot, who had been with Columbus in his voyage to Paria\*. Such was the expedition which, by a singular train of circumstances, eventuated in giving the name of this Florentine merchant, Americo Vespuccio, to the whole of the new world.

This expedition had sailed in May, 1499. The adventurers had arrived on the southern continent, and had ranged along its coast, from two hundred leagues east of the Orinoco to the gulf of Paria : guided by the chart of Columbus, they had passed through this gulf, and out at the Boca del Dragon ; had kept along westward to Cape de la Vela, visiting the Island of Margarita, and the adjacent continent, and discovering the gulf of Venezuela. They had subsequently touched at the Caribbee islands, where they had fought with the fierce natives, and made many captives, with the intention of selling them in the slave markets of Spain. From thence, being in need of supplies, they had sailed to Hispaniola ; having performed the most extensive voyage hitherto made along the shores of the new world†.

Having collected all the information that he could obtain concerning these voyagers, their adventures and designs ; and

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\* Las Casas.

† Herrera, Hist. Ind. D. 1, L. 4, C. 4. Muñoz, Hist. N. Mundo, part in M. S. unpublished.

trusting to the declaration of Ojeda that he should proceed forthwith to present himself before the admiral; Roldan returned to St. Domingo to render in a report of his mission.

## CHAPTER VII.

## MANŒUVRES OF ROLDAN AND OJEDA.

1500. WHEN intelligence was brought to Columbus of the nature of the expedition of Ojeda, and the license under which he sailed, he considered himself deeply aggrieved, it being a direct infraction of his most important prerogatives, and sanctioned by authority that ought to have held them sacred. He awaited patiently, however, the promised visit of Alonzo de Ojeda to St. Domingo, to obtain fuller explanations. Nothing was further from the intention of that roving commander than to keep such promise. He had made it merely to elude the vigilance of Roldan. As soon as he had refitted his vessels, and obtained a supply of provisions, he sailed round to the coast of Xaragua, where he arrived in February. Here he was well received by the Spaniards resident in that province, who supplied all his wants. Among them were many of the late comrades of Roldan, loose random characters, impatient of all order and restraint, and burning with animosity against the admiral, for having again brought them under the wholesome authority of the laws.

Knowing the rash and fearless character of Ojeda, and finding that there were jealousies between him and the admiral, they hailed him as a new leader, come to redress their fancied

grievances, in place of Roldan, who they considered as having deserted them. They made clamorous complaints to Ojeda of the injustice of the admiral, whom they charged with withholding from them the arrearages of their pay. Ojeda was a hot-headed man, with somewhat of a vaunting spirit, and immediately set himself up for a redresser of grievances. It is said, also, that he gave himself out as authorized by government, in conjunction with Caravajal, to act as counsellors, or rather supervisors of the admiral; and that one of the first measures they were to take, was to enforce the payment of all arrears due to the servants of the crown\*. It is questionable, however, whether Ojeda made any pretension of the kind, which could so readily be disproved, and would have tended to disgrace him with the government. It is probable that he was encouraged in his intermeddling, chiefly by his knowledge of the tottering state of the admiral's favour at court, and of his own security in the powerful protection of Fonseca. He may have imbibed also the opinion, diligently fostered by those with whom he had chiefly communed in Spain, just before his departure, that these people had been driven to extremities by the oppression of the admiral and his brothers. Some feeling of generosity, therefore, it is probable, mingled with his usual love of action and enterprize, when he proposed to redress all their wrongs, to put himself at their head, march at once to St. Domingo, and oblige the admiral to pay them on the spot, or expel him from the island. The proposition of Ojeda was received with acclamations of transport by some of the rebels; others made objections. Quarrels arose. A ruffian scene of violence and brawl ensued, in which several

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\* Hist. del Almirante. Cap. 84.

were killed and wounded on both sides; but the party for the expedition to St. Domingo remained triumphant.

Fortunately for the peace and safety of the admiral, Roldan arrived in the neighbourhood just at this critical juncture, attended by a crew of resolute followers. He had been dispatched by Columbus to watch the movements of Ojeda, on hearing of his arrival on the coast of Xaragua. On his way, Roldan had heard of the violent scenes which were taking place, and sent to his old confederate, Diego de Escobar, to follow him with all the trusty force he could collect. They reached Xaragua within a day of each other. An instance of the bad faith usual between bad men was now evinced. The former partisans of Roldan, finding him earnest in his intention of serving government, and that there was no hope of engaging him in their new sedition, sought to take him by surprise, and cut him off on his approach; but his vigilance and celerity prevented them\*.

Ojeda, when he heard of the approach of Roldan and Escobar, retired on board of his ships. Though of a daring spirit, he had no inclination, in the present instance, to come to blows, where there was a certainty of desperate fighting, and no gain, and where he must raise his arm against government. Roldan now held forth the doctrine which had so often been preached to himself in vain. He wrote to Ojeda, remonstrating on his conduct, and the confusion he was producing in the island, and invited him on shore to an amicable arrangement of all alleged grievances. Ojeda, knowing the crafty and violent character of Roldan, disregarded his repeated messages, and refused to venture within his power. He even seized one of his messengers, Diego de

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\* Hist. del Almirante, ubi sup.

Truxillo, and landing suddenly at Xaragua, carried off another of his followers, named Toribio de Lenares; both of whom he detained in irons on board of his vessel, as hostages for a certain Juan Pintor, a one-armed sailor, who had deserted; threatening to hang them, if the deserter was not given up\*.

Various manœuvres took place between these two well-matched opponents, each wary of the address and prowess of the other. Ojeda made sail and stood twelve leagues to the northward, to the province of Cahay, one of the most beautiful and fertile parts of the country, and inhabited by a kind and gentle people. Here he landed with forty men, seizing upon whatever he could find of the provisions of the natives. Roldan and Escobar followed along shore, and were soon on his traces. Here Roldan dispatched Escobar in a light canoe, paddled swiftly by Indians, who, approaching warily within hail of the ship, informed Ojeda, that since he would not trust himself on shore, Roldan would come and confer with him on board, if he would send a boat for him.

Ojeda now thought himself secure of his enemy. He immediately dispatched a boat within a short distance of the shore, where they lay on their oars, requiring Roldan to come to them. "How many may accompany me?" demanded the latter. "Only five or six," was the reply. Upon this, Diego de Escobar and four others waded to the boat. The crew refused to admit more. Roldan then ordered one man to carry him to the barge, and another to walk by his side, and assist him. By this stratagem his party was eight strong. The instant he entered the boat, he ordered the oarsmen to row to shore. On their refusing, he and his

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\* Las Casas, Hist. Ind. L. 1, C. 169. MS.

companions attacked them sword in hand, wounded several, and made all prisoners, excepting an Indian archer, who, plunging under the water, escaped by swimming.

This was an important triumph for Roldan. Ojeda, anxious for the recovery of his boat, which was indispensable to the service of the ship, now made overtures of peace. He approached the shore in the smaller boat which was left him, taking with him his principal pilot, an arquebusier, and four oarsmen. Roldan entered the boat he had just captured, with seven rowers and fifteen fighting men, causing fifteen others to be ready on shore to embark in a large canoe in case of need. A characteristic interview took place between these doughty antagonists, each keeping warily on his guard. Their conference was carried on at a distance. Ojeda justified his hostile movements, by alleging that Roldan had come with an armed force to seize him. This the latter positively denied, promising him the most amicable reception from the admiral, in case he would repair to St. Domingo. An arrangement was at length effected; the boat was restored; a mutual restitution of the men took place, with the exception of Juan Pintor, the one-armed deserter, who had absconded; and on the following day, Ojeda, according to agreement, set sail to leave the island, threatening, however, to return at a future time with more ships and men\*.

Roldan waited in the neighbourhood, doubting the truth of his departure. In the course of a few days word was brought him that Ojeda had landed on a distant part of the coast. He immediately pursued him with eighty men, in canoes, sending scouts by land. Before he arrived at the

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\* Letter of Columbus to the nurse of Prince Juan.

place, Ojeda had again made sail, and Roldan saw and heard no more of him. Las Casas asserts, however, that Ojeda departed either to some remote district of Hispaniola, or to the island of Porto Rico, where he made up what he called his *cavalgada*, or drove of slaves; carrying off numbers of the unhappy natives, whom he sold in the slave market of Cadiz\*.

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\* Las Casas, L. 1, C. 169.



## CHAPTER VIII.

## CONSPIRACY OF GUEVARA AND MOXICA.

1500. WHEN men have been accustomed to act falsely, they take vast merit to themselves for an exertion of common honesty. The followers of Roldan were loud in trumpeting forth their unwonted loyalty, and the great services they had rendered to government in driving Ojeda from the island. Like all ill reformed knaves, they expected that their good conduct would be amply rewarded. Looking upon their leader as having every thing in his gift, and being well pleased with the delightful province of Cabay, they requested him to share the land among them, that they might settle there. Roldan would have had no hesitation in granting their request had it been made during his freebooting career; but he was now anxious to establish a character for adherence to the laws. He declined therefore acceding to their wishes, until sanctioned by the admiral. Knowing, however, that he had fostered a spirit among these men which it was dangerous to contradict, and that their rapacity by long indulgence did not admit of delay, he shared among them certain lands of his own, in the territory of his ancient host Behechio, cacique of Xaragua. He then wrote to the admiral for permission to return to St. Domingo, and received a letter in reply, giving him many thanks and com-

commendations for the diligence and address which he had manifested, but requesting him to remain for a time in Xaragua, lest Ojeda should be yet hovering about the coast, and disposed to make another descent in that province.

The troubles of the island were not yet at an end, but were destined again to break forth, and from somewhat of a romantic cause. There arrived about this time at Xaragua a young cavalier of noble family, named Don Hernando de Guevara. He possessed an agreeable person and winning manners, but was rash in his passions, and dissolute in his principles. He was cousin to Adrian de Moxica, one of the most active ringleaders in the late rebellion of Roldan; and had conducted himself with such licentiousness at St. Domingo, that Columbus had banished him from the island. There being no other opportunity of embarking, he had been sent to Xaragua, to return to Spain in one of the ships of Ojeda, but arrived after their departure. Roldan received him favourably, on account of his old comrade Adrian de Moxica, and permitted him to choose some place where he would reside, until further orders concerning him should arrive from the admiral. He chose the province of Cahay, at the place where Roldan had captured the boat of Ojeda. It was a beautiful part of that delightful coast; but the reason why Guevara chose it, was its vicinity to Xaragua. While at the latter place, in consequence of the indulgence of Roldan, he was favourably received at the house of Anacaona, the widow of Caonabo, and sister of the cacique Behechio. That remarkable woman still retained her partiality to the Spaniards, notwithstanding the disgraceful scenes which had passed before her eyes; and the native dignity of her character had commanded the respect even of the dissolute rabble which had infested her province. By her late husband, the

cacique Caonabo, she had a daughter named Higuaniota, just grown up, and greatly admired for her beauty. Guevara, being often in company with her, became enamoured, and his personal advantages soon won the heart of the simple Indian girl. It was to be near her that he chose Cahay as a residence ; at a place where his cousin Adrian de Moxica kept a number of dogs and hawks, to be employed in the chase.

Guevara delayed his departure. Roldan discovered the object that bound him to Xaragua, and warned him to desist from his pretensions and leave the province. Las Casas intimates that Roldan was himself attached to the young Indian beauty, and jealous of her preference of his rival. Anacaona, the mother, pleased with the gallant appearance and ingratiating manners of the youthful cavalier, favoured his attachment ; especially as he sought her daughter in marriage. Notwithstanding the orders of Roldan, Guevara still lingered in Xaragua, in the house of Anacaona ; and sending for a priest, desired him to baptize his intended bride.

When Roldan heard of this, he sent for Guevara, and rebuked him sharply for remaining at Xaragua, and for attempting to deceive a person of the importance of Anacaona, by ensnaring the affections of her daughter. Guevara avowed the strength of his passion, and his correct intentions, and entreated permission to remain. Roldan was inflexible. He alleged that some evil construction might be put on his conduct by the admiral : but it is probable his true motive was a desire to send away a rival, who interfered with his own amorous designs. Guevara obeyed, but had scarce been three days at Cahay, when, unable to remain longer absent from the object of his passion, he returned to Xaragua,

accompanied by four or five friends, and concealed himself in the dwelling of Anacaona.

Roldan, who was at that time confined by a malady in his eyes, being apprized of his return, sent persons to upbraid him with his disobedience to orders, and to command him to return instantly to Cahay. The young cavalier now assumed a tone of defiance. He warned Roldan not to make foes when he had such great need of friends ; for to his certain knowledge, the admiral intended to take off his head. Upon this, Roldan, assuming the magistrate, ordered him to quit that part of the island, and repair to St. Domingo, to present himself before the admiral. The thoughts of being banished entirely from the vicinity of his Indian beauty, checked the vehemence of the youth. He changed his tone of haughty defiance into one of humble supplication ; and Roldan, appeased by this submission, permitted him to remain, for the present, in that part of the island.

Roldan was doomed to reap the fruits of the mischief he had sown. He had instilled wilfulness and violence into the hearts of his late followers, and now was exposed to the effects. Guevara, incensed at this opposition to his passion, meditated revenge. He soon made a party among the old comrades of Roldan, who detested as a magistrate, the man they had idolized as a leader. It was concerted to rise suddenly upon him, and either to kill him or put out his eyes. Roldan was apprized of the plot, and proceeded with his usual promptness. Guevara was seized in the dwelling of Anacaona, in the presence of his intended bride. Seven of his accomplices were likewise arrested. Roldan immediately sent an account of the affair to the admiral ; professing at present to do nothing without his authority, and declaring himself not competent to judge impar-

tially in the case. Columbus, who was at that time at fort Conception in the Vega, ordered that the prisoners should be conducted to the fortress of St. Domingo.

These vigorous measures, on the part of Roldan, towards his old comrades, produced immediate commotions in the island. When Adrian de Moxica heard that his cousin Guevara was a prisoner, and that too by command of his former confederate, he was highly exasperated, and resolved on vengeance. Hastening to Bonao, the old haunt of rebellion, he called upon the co-operation of Pedro Requelme, the recently appointed alcalde. It was readily yielded. They went round together to the various parts of the Vega, where their late companions in rebellion had received lands and settled, working upon their ready passions, and enlisting their feelings in the cause of an old comrade. These men seem to have had an irresistible propensity to sedition. Guevara was a favourite with them all; the charms of the Indian beauty had probably their influence; and the conduct of Roldan was pronounced a tyrannical interference, to prevent a marriage agreeable to all parties, and beneficial to the colony. There is no being so odious to his former associates, as a reformed robber, or rebel, enlisted in the service of justice. The old scenes of faction were renewed; the weapons which had scarce been hung up from the recent rebellions, were again snatched down from the walls, and rash preparations were made for action. Moxica soon saw a body of daring and reckless men, ready with horse and weapon, to follow him on any desperate enterprize. Blinded by the impunity which had attended their former outrages, he now threatened acts of greater atrocity, meditating not merely the rescue of his cousin, but the deaths of Roldan and the admiral.

Columbus was at fort Conception, with an inconsiderable force, when this dangerous plot was concerted in his very neighbourhood. Not dreaming of any further hostilities from men on whom he had lavished such favours, he would doubtless have fallen in their power, had not intelligence been brought him of the plot by a deserter from the conspirators. He saw at a glance the perils by which he was surrounded, and the evils that were about to burst over the island. It was no longer a time for lenient measures ; he determined to strike a blow, which should crush the very head of rebellion.

Taking with him but six or seven trusty servants, and three esquires, all well armed, he set out in the night for the place where the ringleaders were quartered. Confiding in the secrecy of their plot, and the late passiveness of the admiral, they appear to have been perfectly unguarded. Columbus came upon them suddenly, and by surprise ; seized Moxica and several of his principal confederates, and bore them off prisoners to fort Conception. The moment was critical ; the Vega was ripe for a revolt ; he had the fomenter of the conspiracy in his power, and an example was called for that should strike terror into the factious. He ordered Moxica to be hanged on the top of the fortress. The latter entreated that he might be allowed to confess himself previous to execution. A priest was summoned. The miserable Moxica, who had been so hardy and arrogant in rebellion, lost all courage at the near approach of death. He delayed to confess, beginning, and pausing, and recommencing, and again hesitating, as if he hoped, by whiling away time, to give a chance for rescue. Instead of confessing his own sins, he began to accuse others of criminality, who were known to be innocent, until Columbus, incensed at this false-

hood and treachery, and losing all patience in his mingled indignation and scorn, ordered the dastard wretch to be flung headlong from the battlements\*. Several of the accomplices of Moxica were condemned to death, but reserved in confinement for the present.

This sudden act of severity was promptly followed up. Before the conspirators had time to recover from their astonishment, Pedro Requelme was taken, with several of his compeers, in his ruffian den at Bonao, and conveyed to the fortress of St. Domingo, where was also confined the original mover of this second rebellion, Fernando de Guevara, the lover of the young Indian princess. These unlooked-for blows, from a quarter which had long been so lenient, had the desired effect. The conspirators, seized with consternation, fled for the most part to Xaragua, their old and favourite retreat. They were not suffered to congregate there again, and concert new seditions. The adelantado, seconded by Roldan, pursued them with his characteristic rapidity of movement, and vigour of arm. It has been said that he carried a priest with him, in order that, as he arrested delinquents, they might be confessed and hanged upon the spot; but the more probable account is, that he transmitted them prisoners to St. Domingo. He had seventeen of them at one time confined in one common dungeon, awaiting their trial, while he continued in indefatigable pursuit of the remainder†.

These were prompt and severe measures; but when we consider how long Columbus had borne with these men;

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\* Herrera, D. 1, L. 4, C. 5.

† Las Casas, Hist. Ind. L. 1, C. 170. MS. Herrera, D. 1, L. 4, C. 7.

how much he had ceded and sacrificed to them ; how he had been interrupted in all his great undertakings, and the welfare of the colony destroyed by their contemptible and seditious brawls ; how they had abused his lenity, defied his authority, and at length attempted his life, we cannot wonder that he should at last let fall the sword of justice, which he had hitherto held suspended.

The power of faction was now completely prostrated, and the good effects of the various measures which Columbus had taken since his last arrival, for the benefit of the island, began to appear. The Indians, seeing the inefficacy of resistance, submitted patiently to the yoke. Many of them gave promising signs of civilization, having embraced Christianity, and in some instances adopted clothing. The Spaniards began to cultivate diligently their lands, assisted by the labours of the natives, and every thing gave assurance of settled and regular prosperity.

Columbus considered all this happy change as brought about by the especial intervention of heaven. He expresses this opinion decidedly in one of his letters, recording an instance of those visionary fancies which at times visited his imagination, when distempered by illness or anxiety. In the preceding winter, about the festival of Christmas, when menaced with war by Indian foes, and insurrections among his people ; when full of distrust of those around him, and apprehensions of disgrace at court, he had for a time sunk into utter despondency. In the midst of his gloom, when he had abandoned himself to despair, he heard, he says, a voice calling to him : " O man of little faith ! be not cast down ; fear nothing ; I will provide for thee. The seven



years of the term of gold are not expired\* ; and in that and in all other things I will take care of thee." On that very day, he adds, he received intelligence of the discovery of a large tract of country rich in mines. The imaginary promise of divine aid thus mysteriously and miraculously given, appeared to him since still more fully accomplished. The troubles and dangers which had recently surrounded him, had at length broken away, and serene tranquillity had succeeded. He now anticipated the prosperous prosecution of his favourite enterprise, so long interrupted ; the exploring of the regions of Paria, and the establishment of a fishery in the Gulf of Pearls. How illusive were his hopes ! At this moment a storm had gathered, and was about to burst over his head, that should overwhelm him with distress, strip him of his honours, and render him comparatively a wreck for the remainder of his days.

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\* Columbus alludes here to the vow which he made on discovering the new world, and expressed in a letter to the sovereigns, that within seven years he would furnish, from the profits of his discoveries, fifty thousand foot, and five thousand horse, for the deliverance of the holy sepulchre, and an additional force of like amount within five years afterwards.

† Letter of Columbus to the nurse of Prince Juan. Hist. del Almirante, Cap. 84.

# **LIFE AND VOYAGES**

OF

## **CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS.**

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### **BOOK XIII.**

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#### **CHAPTER I.**

**REPRESENTATIONS AT COURT AGAINST COLUMBUS—BOBADILLA EMPOWERED TO EXAMINE INTO HIS CONDUCT.**

1500. WHILE Columbus had been involved in a series of difficulties in the factious island of Hispaniola, his enemies had been but too successful in undermining his standing in the court of Spain. The report brought by Ojeda of his anticipated disgrace was not entirely unfounded. The event was considered as near at hand, and every perfidious exertion made to accelerate it. Every vessel that returned from the new world came freighted with complaints and complainants, representing the characters of Columbus and his brothers in the most odious point of view, as new men, inflated by their sudden rise from obscurity, unaccustomed to command, arrogant and insulting in their conduct towards men of birth and lofty spirit, oppressive in their rule

over the common people, and cruel in their treatment of the natives. The insidious and illiberal insinuation was continually urged, that they were foreigners, who could have no interest in the glory of Spain, or the prosperity of Spaniards; and, contemptible as this plea may seem, it had a most powerful effect. It was even carried to such a length, that Columbus was accused of a design to cast off all allegiance to Spain, and to make himself sovereign of the countries he had discovered, or to yield them into the hands of some other power: a slander which, however extravagant, was calculated to startle the jealous mind of Ferdinand.

It is true, that by every ship Columbus likewise sent home statements, written with all the frankness and energy of truth, setting forth the real cause and nature of the distractions of the island, and pointing out and imploring remedies which, if properly applied, might have been efficacious. But his letters, arriving at distant intervals, made but single and transient impressions on the royal mind, which were speedily effaced by the influence of daily and active misrepresentation. His enemies at court, having continual access to the ear of the sovereigns, were enabled to place every thing urged against him in the strongest point of view; while they secretly neutralized the force of his vindications. They had a plausible logic which they continually used, to prove either bad management or bad faith in Columbus. There was an incessant drain upon the treasury for the support of the colony. Was this compatible with the extravagant pictures he had drawn of the wealth of the island, and its golden mountains, in which he had pretended to find the veritable Ophir, the source of all the riches of Solomon? They inferred that he had either deceived the sovereigns by designing exaggerations, or he had grossly wronged them by

malepractices, or he was totally incapable of the duties of government.

The disappointment of Ferdinand, in finding his newly discovered possessions a source of expense instead of profit, was known to press sorely on his mind. The wars dictated by his ambition had straitened his resources, and involved him in perplexities. He had looked with confidence to the new world for relief, and for ample means to pursue his triumphs; and he grew impatient at the repeated demands which it occasioned on his scanty treasury. To quicken his irritability on this point, every disappointed and repining man who returned from the colony, was encouraged to put in claims for pay withheld by Columbus, or losses sustained in his service. This was especially the case with the loose rabble which had been shipped off to free the island from their seditions. They found their way to the court at Granada. They followed the king when he rode out, filling the air with their complaints, and clamouring for their pay. At one time, about fifty of these vagabonds found their way into the inner court of the Alhambra, under the royal apartments, holding up bunches of grapes as the meagre diet left them by their poverty, and railing aloud at the deceits of Columbus, and the cruel neglect of government. The two sons of Columbus happening to pass by, who were pages to the queen, they followed them with imprecations, exclaiming, "There go the sons of the admiral, the whelps of him who discovered the land of vanity and delusion, the grave of Spanish hidalgos!\*"

The incessant repetition even of falsehood will gradually wear its way into the most candid mind. Isabella herself

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\* Hist. del Almirante, C. 85.

began to entertain doubts respecting the conduct of Columbus. Where there was such universal and incessant complaint, it seemed reasonable to conclude that there must exist some fault. If Columbus and his brothers were upright, they might be injudicious; and in government mischief is oftener produced through error of judgment, than iniquity of design. The letters written by Columbus himself presented a lamentable picture of the confusion of the island. Might not this arise from the weakness and incapacity of the rulers? Even granting that the prevalent abuses arose in a great measure from the enmity of the people to the admiral and his brothers, and their prejudices against them as foreigners, was it safe to intrust so important and distant a command to persons who were so unpopular with the community?

These considerations had much weight in the candid mind of Isabella, but they were all powerful with the cautious and jealous Ferdinand. He had never regarded Columbus with real cordiality; and, ever since he had ascertained the importance of his discoveries, had regretted the extensive powers he had vested in his hands. The excessive clamours which had arisen during the brief administration of the adelantado, and the breaking out of the faction of Roldan, at length determined the king to send out some person of standing and ability, to investigate the affairs of the colony, and if necessary for its safety, to take upon himself the command.

This important and critical measure it appears had been decided upon, and the papers and powers actually drawn out, in the spring of 1499. It was not, however, carried into effect until the following year. Various reasons have been assigned for this delay. The important services ren-

dered by Columbus, in the discovery of Paria and the pearl islands, may have had some effect on the royal mind. The necessity of fitting out an armament just at that moment, to co-operate with the Venetians against the Turks; the menacing movements of the new king of France, Louis XII; the rebellion of the Moors of the Alpuxaria mountains, in the lately conquered kingdom of Granada; all these have been alleged as reasons for postponing a measure which called for much consideration, and might have important effects upon the newly discovered possessions\*. The most probable reason, however, was the strong disinclination of Isabella to take so harsh a step against a man for whom she entertained such ardent gratitude and high admiration.

At length the arrival of the ships with the late followers of Roldan, according to their capitulation, brought matters to a crisis. It is true, that Ballester and Barrantes came in these ships, to place the affairs of the island in a proper light; but they brought out a cloud of witnesses in favour of Roldan, and letters written by himself and his confederates, attributing all their late conduct to the tyranny of Columbus and his brothers. Unfortunately, the testimony of the rebels had the greatest weight with Ferdinand; and there was a circumstance in the case which suspended for a time the friendship of Isabella, which had hitherto been the great dependence of Columbus.

The queen having taken a maternal interest in the welfare of the natives, had been repeatedly offended by what appeared to her pertinacity on the part of the admiral, in continuing to make slaves of those taken in warfare, in contradiction of her known wishes. The same ships which

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\* Muñoz, Hist. N. Mundo—Part unpublished.

brought home the companions of Roldan brought likewise a great number of slaves. Some Columbus had been obliged to grant to these men by the articles of capitulation; others they had brought away clandestinely. Among them were several daughters of caciques, who had been seduced away from their families and their native island by these profligates. Some of these were in a state of pregnancy, others had new-born infants. This was represented, in all its force, to Isabella, and described as the gratuitous act of Columbus. Her sensibility as a woman, and her dignity as a queen, were instantly in arms. "What power," exclaimed she indignantly, "has the admiral to give away my vassals\*?" She determined, by one decided and peremptory act, to show her abhorrence of these outrages upon humanity. She ordered all the Indians to be restored to their country and friends. Nay more, her measure was retrospective. She commanded that those which had formerly been sent home by the admiral should be sought out, and sent back to Hispaniola. Unfortunately for Columbus, at this very juncture, in one of his letters, he had advised the continuance of Indian slavery for some time longer, as a measure important for the welfare of the colony. This contributed to heighten the indignation of Isabella, and induced her no longer to oppose the sending out of a commission to investigate his conduct, and if necessary to supersede him in command.

Ferdinand had been exceedingly embarrassed, in appointing this commission, between his sense of what was due to the character and services of Columbus, and his anxiety to retract with decency the powers which he had vested in him.

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\* Las Casas, L. 1.

A pretext at length was furnished by the recent letters of the admiral, and he seized upon it with avidity. Columbus had repeatedly requested that a person might be sent out, of talents and probity, learned in the law, to act as chief judge ; but whose powers should be so limited and defined, as not to interfere with his own authority as viceroy. He had also requested that an impartial umpire might be appointed, to decide in the affair between himself and Roldan. Ferdinand professed to consult his wishes, but to unite those two offices in one ; and as the person so appointed would have to decide in matters touching the highest functions of the admiral, and his brothers, he was empowered, should he find them culpable, to supersede them in the government ; a singular mode of ensuring partiality.

The person chosen for this most momentous and delicate office, was Don Francisco de Bobadilla, an officer of the royal household, and a commander of the military and religious order of Calatrava. Oviedo pronounces him a very honest and religious man\* ; but he is represented by others, and his actions corroborate the description, as needy, passionate, and ambitious ; three powerful objections to his exercising arbitrament in a case requiring the utmost patience, candour, and circumspection, and where the judge was to derive wealth and power from the conviction of one of the parties.

The authority vested in Bobadilla is defined in letters from the sovereigns still extant, and which deserve to be noticed chronologically ; for the royal intentions appear to have varied with times and circumstances. The first was dated on the 21st of March, 1499, and mentions the complaint of the admiral, that an alcalde and certain other persons had

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\* Oviedo, Cronica, L. 3, C. 6.



risen in rebellion against him. "Wherefore," adds the letter, "we order you to inform yourself of the truth of the foregoing: who and what persons they were who rose against the said admiral, and our justices, and for what cause, and what robberies and other injuries they have committed, and of whatever else you find it necessary to inform yourself on this subject; and the information obtained, and the truth known, whomever you find culpable *take their bodies and sequester their effects*; and thus taken, proceed against them, and against the absent, to the greatest civil and criminal punishments that you find they merit."

To carry this into effect he was authorized, in case of necessity, to call in the assistance of the admiral and of all other persons in authority.

The powers here given are manifestly directed merely against the rebels, and in consequence of the complaints of Columbus. Another letter, dated on the 21st of May, two months subsequently, is of quite a different purport. It makes no mention of Columbus, but is addressed to the counsellors, justices, regidores, cavaliers, esquires, officers, and men of property of the islands, and Terra Firma; informing them of the appointment of Bobadilla to the government, with full civil and criminal jurisdiction. Among the powers specified is the following: "It is our will that if the said commander, Francisco de Bobadilla, should think it necessary for our service, and the purposes of justice, that any cavaliers, or other persons, who are at present in those islands, or may arrive there, should leave them, and not return and reside in them, and that they should come and present themselves before us, he may command it in our name, and oblige them to depart; and whomever he thus commands, we hereby order that immediately, without waiting to inquire or consult us, or to receive

from us any other letter or command ; and without interposing appeal or supplication, they obey whatever he shall say and order, under the penalties which he shall impose on our part," &c.

Another letter, dated likewise on the 21st of May, in which Columbus is styled simply, " admiral of the Ocean sea," orders him and his brothers to surrender the fortresses, ships, houses, arms, ammunition, cattle, and all other royal property, into the hands of Bobadilla as governor ; under penalty of incurring the punishments to which those subject themselves, who refuse to surrender fortresses and other trusts, when commanded by their sovereigns.

A fourth letter, dated on the 26th of May, and addressed to Columbus simply by the title of admiral, is a mere letter of credence, ordering him to give faith and obedience to whatever Bobadilla should impart.

The second and third of these letters were evidently provisional ; and only to be produced, if on examination there should appear such delinquency on the part of Columbus and his brothers, as to warrant their being divested of command. This heavy blow, as has been shown, remained suspended for a year ; yet, that it was whispered about, and triumphantly anticipated by the enemies of Columbus, is evident from the assertions of Ojeda, who sailed from Spain about the time of the signature of those letters, and had intimate communications with bishop Fonseca, who was considered, instrumental in producing this measure. The very license granted by the bishop to Ojeda, to sail on a voyage of discovery in contravention of the prerogatives of the admiral, has the air of being given on a presumption of his speedy downfall ; and the same presumption, as has already been observed, must have encouraged Ojeda in his turbulent conduct at Xaragua.

At length the long projected measure was carried into effect. Bobadilla set sail for St. Domingo about the middle of July, 1500, with two caravels, in which were twenty-five men as a kind of guard, who were enlisted to serve for a year. There were six friars, likewise, who had charge of a number of Indians sent back to their country. Beside the letters patent, Bobadilla was authorized by a royal order to ascertain all arrears of pay due to persons in the service of the crown, and to discharge them; and to oblige the admiral to pay what was due on his part, "so that those people might receive what was owing to them, and there might be no more complaints." In addition to all these powers, Bobadilla was furnished with many blank letters signed by the sovereigns, to be filled up by him in such manner, and directed to such persons, as he might think important to the mission with which he was intrusted\*.

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\* Herrera, D. 1, L. 4, C. 7.

## CHAPTER II.

ARRIVAL OF BOBADILLA AT ST. DOMINGO—HIS VIOLENT  
ASSUMPTION OF THE COMMAND.

1500. COLUMBUS was still at fort Conception, regulating the affairs of the Vega, after the catastrophe of the sedition of Moxica. His brother, the adelantado, accompanied by Roldan, was pursuing and arresting the fugitive rebels in Xaragua, and Don Diego Columbus remained in temporary command at St. Domingo. Faction had in a manner destroyed itself. The insurgents had pulled ruin upon their own heads; and the island appeared delivered from the domination of violent and lawless men.

Such was the state of public affairs when, on the morning of the 23d of August, two caravels were descried off the harbour of St. Domingo, about a league at sea. They were standing off and on, waiting until the sea-breeze, which generally prevails about ten o'clock, should bring them into port. Don Diego Columbus supposed them to be ships sent from Spain with supplies, and hoped to find on board his nephew Diego, who the admiral had requested might be sent out to assist him in his various concerns. A canoe was immediately dispatched to obtain information; which approaching the caravels inquired what news they brought, and whether Diego, the son of the admiral, was on board. Boba-

dilla himself replied from the principal vessel, announcing himself as a commissioner sent out to investigate the late rebellion. The master of the caravel then inquired about the news of the island, and was informed of the recent transactions. Seven of the rebels, he was told, had been hanged that week, and five more were in the fortress of St. Domingo, condemned to suffer the same fate. Among these were Pedro Requelme, and Fernando de Guevara, the young cavalier whose passion for the daughter of Anacaona had been the original cause of the rebellion. Further conversation passed, in the course of which Bobadilla ascertained that the admiral and the adelantado were absent, and Don Diego Columbus in command.

When the canoe returned to the city, and it was known that a commissioner had arrived to make inquisition into the late troubles, there was a great stir and agitation throughout the community. Knots of whisperers gathered in every direction. Those who were conscious of malepractices were filled with consternation; while those who had grievances, real or imaginary, to complain of, especially those whose pay was in arrear, appeared with joyful countenances\*.

As the vessels entered the river, Bobadilla beheld on either bank a gibbet with the body of a Spaniard hanging on it, apparently but lately executed. He considered these as conclusive proofs of the alleged cruelty of Columbus. Many boats came off to the ship, every one being anxious to pay early court to this public censor. Bobadilla remained on board all day, in the course of which he collected much of the rumours of the place; and as those who sought to se-

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\* Las Casas, H. Ind. L. 1, C. 179. Herrera, H. Ind. D. 1, L. 4, C. 8.

cure his favour, were those who had most to fear from his investigations, it is evident that the nature of the rumours must generally have been unfavourable to Columbus. In fact, before Bobadilla landed, if not before he had arrived, the culpability of the admiral was decided in his mind.

The next morning he landed with all his followers, and went to the church to attend mass, where he found Don Diego Columbus, Rodrigo Perez, the lieutenant of the admiral, and other persons of note. Mass being ended, and those persons, with a multitude of the populace, being assembled at the door of the church, Bobadilla ordered his letters patent to be read, authorizing him to investigate the rebellion, to seize the persons, and sequester the property of delinquents, and to proceed against them with the utmost rigour of the law; commanding also the admiral, and all others in authority, to assist him in the discharge of his duties. The letter being read, he demanded of Don Diego and the alcaides to surrender to him the persons of Fernando Guevara, Pedro Requelme, and the other prisoners, with the processes that had been taken concerning them; and ordered that the parties by whom they were accused, and those by whose command they had been taken, should appear before him.

Don Diego replied, that what had been done had been by order of the admiral, who held superior powers to any that Bobadilla could possess, and without whose authority he could do nothing. He requested, at the same time, a copy of the letters patent, that he might send it to his brother, to whom alone the matter appertained. This Bobadilla refused, observing that if Don Diego had power to do nothing, it was useless to give him a copy. He added, that since the office and authority he had proclaimed appeared to have no

weight, he would try what power and consequence there was in the name of governor, and would show them that he had command, not merely over them, but over the admiral himself.

The little community remained in breathless suspense, awaiting the portentous movements of Bobadilla. The next morning he appeared at mass, resolved on assuming those powers which were only to have been produced after full investigation, and ample proof of the maleconduct of Columbus. When mass was over, and the eager populace had gathered round the door of the church, Bobadilla, in presence of Don Diego and Rodrigo Perez, ordered his other royal patent to be read, investing him with the government of the islands, and of Terra Firma.

The patent being read, Bobadilla took the customary oath, and then claimed the obedience of Don Diego, Rodrigo Perez, and all present, to the royal instrument; on the authority of which he again demanded the prisoners confined in the fortress. In reply, they professed the utmost deference to the letter of their majesties; but again observed that they held the prisoners in obedience to the admiral, to whom the sovereigns had granted letters of a higher nature.

The self-importance of Bobadilla was incensed at this noncompliance, especially as he saw it had some effect upon the populace, who appeared to doubt his authority. He now produced the third mandate of the crown, ordering Columbus and his brothers to deliver up all fortresses, ships, and other royal property. To win the public completely on his side, he read also the additional mandate, issued on the 30th of May, of the same year, ordering him to pay the arrears of wages due to all persons in the royal service, and to

compel the admiral to pay the arrears of those to whom he was accountable.

This last document was received with shouts by the multitude, many having long arrears due to them, in consequence of the poverty of the treasury. Flushed with his growing importance, Bobadilla again demanded the prisoners, threatening, if refused, to take them by force. Meeting with the same reply, he repaired to the fortress to execute his threats. This post was commanded by Miguel Diaz, the same Arragonian cavalier who had once taken refuge among the Indians on the banks of the Ozema, won the affections of the female cacique Catalina, received from her information of the neighbouring gold mines, and had induced his countrymen to remove to these parts.

When Bobadilla came before the fortress, he found the gates closed, and the alcayde Miguel Diaz upon the battlements. He ordered his letters patent to be read with a loud voice, the signatures and seals to be held up to view, and then demanded the surrender of the prisoners. Diaz requested a copy of the letters; but this Bobadilla refused, alleging that there was no time for delay, the prisoners being under sentence of death, and liable at any moment to be executed. He threatened, at the same time, that if they were not given up, he would proceed to extremities, and Diaz would be answerable for the consequences. The wary alcayde again required time to reply, and a copy of the letters, saying that he held the fortress for the king by the command of the admiral, his lord, who had gained these territories and islands, and that when the latter arrived he should obey his orders\*.

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\* Las Casas, Hist. Ind. L. 1, C. 179.



The whole spirit of Bobadilla was roused within him at the refusal of the alcaide. Assembling all the people he had brought from Spain, together with the sailors from the ships, and the rabble of the place, he exhorted them to aid him in getting possession of the prisoners, but to harm no one unless in case of resistance. The mob shouted assent, for Bobadilla was already the idol of the multitude. About the hour of vespers he set out, at the head of this motley army, to storm a fortress destitute of a garrison, and formidable only in name, being calculated to withstand only a naked and slightly armed people. The accounts of this transaction have something in them bordering on the ludicrous, and give it the air of an absurd rodomontade. Bobadilla assailed the portal with great impetuosity, the frail bolts and locks of which gave way at the first shock, and gave him an easy admission. In the meantime, however, his zealous myrmidons applied ladders to the walls, as if about to carry the place by assault, and to experience a desperate defence. The alcaide, Miguel Diaz, and Don Diego de Alvarado alone appeared on the battlements; they had drawn swords, but offered no resistance. Bobadilla entered the fortress in triumph and without molestation. The prisoners were found in a chamber in irons. He ordered that they should be brought up to him to the top of the fortress, where having put a few questions to them as a matter of form, he gave them in charge to an alguazil, named Juan de Espinosa\*.

Such was the blustering and precipitate entrance into office of Francisco de Bobadilla. He had reversed the order of his written instructions, having seized upon the govern-

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\* Las Casas, ubi sup. Herrera, ubi sup.

ment before he had investigated the conduct of Columbus. He continued his career in the same spirit, acting as if the case had been prejudged in Spain, and he had been sent out merely to degrade the admiral from his employments, not to ascertain the manner in which he had fulfilled them. He took up his residence at the house of Columbus, seized upon his arms, gold, plate, jewels, horses, his books, letters, and other writings, both public and private, even to his most secret papers. He gave no account of the property thus seized, and which he no doubt considered already confiscated to the crown, excepting that he paid out of it the wages of those to whom the admiral was in arrears\*.

To increase his favour with the people, he proclaimed, on the second day of his assumption of power, a general license for the term of twenty years, to seek for gold, paying merely one eleventh to government, instead of a third as heretofore. At the same time, he spoke in the most disrespectful and unqualified terms of Columbus, saying that he was empowered to send him home in chains, and that neither he nor any of his lineage would ever again be permitted to govern in the island†.

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\* Hist. del Almirante, C. 85, Las Casas. Herrera, ubi sup.

† Letter of Columbus to the nurse of Prince Juan.

## CHAPTER III.

## COLUMBUS SUMMONED TO APPEAR BEFORE BOBADILLA.

1500. WHEN the tidings reached Columbus at fort Conception of the high-handed proceedings of Bobadilla, he considered them the unauthorized acts of some rash adventurer like Ojeda. Since government had apparently thrown open the door to private enterprize, he might expect to have his path continually crossed, and his jurisdiction infringed, by bold intermeddlers, feigning or fancying themselves authorized to interfere in the affairs of the colony. Since the departure of Ojeda, another squadron had touched upon the coast, and produced a transient alarm; being an expedition under one of the Pinzons, licensed by the sovereigns to make discoveries. There had also been a rumour of another squadron hovering about the island; which proved, however, to be unfounded\*.

The conduct of Bobadilla bore all the appearance of a lawless usurpation of some intruder of the kind. He had possessed himself forcibly of the fortress, and consequently of the town. He had issued extravagant licenses, injurious to the government, and apparently intended only to make partisans among the people; and he had threatened to throw

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\* Letter of Columb. to the nurse of Prince Juan.

Columbus himself in irons. That this man could really be sanctioned by government, in such intemperate measures, was repugnant to belief. The admiral's consciousness of his own services; the repeated assurances of high consideration on the part of the sovereigns; and the perpetual prerogatives granted to him under their hand and seal, with all the solemnity that a compact could possess; all forbade him to consider the transactions at St. Domingo in any other light than that of outrages on his authority, by some daring or misguided individual.

To be nearer to St. Domingo, and obtain more correct information, he proceeded to Bonao, which was now beginning to assume the appearance of a settlement; several Spaniards having erected houses there, and cultivated the adjacent country. He had scarcely reached Bonao, when an alcalde, bearing a staff of office, arrived there from St. Domingo, proclaiming the appointment of Bobadilla to the government, and bearing copies of his letters patent. There was no especial letter or message sent to the admiral, nor were any of the common forms of courtesy and ceremony observed in superseding him in the command. All the proceedings of Bobadilla towards him were abrupt and insulting.

Columbus was exceedingly embarrassed how to act. It was evident that Bobadilla was intrusted with extensive powers by the sovereigns: but that they could have exercised such a sudden, unmerited, and apparently capricious act of severity towards him, as that of divesting him of all his commands, he could not believe. He endeavoured to persuade himself that Bobadilla was some person sent out to exercise the functions of chief judge, according to the request he had written home to the sovereigns; and that they had intrusted him likewise with provisional powers, to make

an inquest into the late troubles of the island. All beyond these powers, he tried to believe, were mere assumptions and exaggerations of authority, as in the case of Aguado. At all events, he was determined to act upon such presumption, and to endeavour to gain time. If the monarchs had really taken any harsh measures with respect to him, it must have been in consequence of misrepresentations. The least delay might give them an opportunity of ascertaining their error, and making the necessary amends. He wrote to Bobadilla, therefore, in guarded terms; welcoming him to the island; cautioning him against precipitate measures, especially in granting licenses to collect gold; informing him that he was on the point of going to Spain, and in a little time would leave him in command, with every thing fully and clearly explained. He wrote at the same time to the like purport to certain monks who had come out with Bobadilla; though he observes that these letters were only written to gain time\*. He received no replies. But while an insulting silence was observed towards him, Bobadilla filled up several of the blank letters, of which he had a number, signed by the sovereigns, and sent them to Roldan and others of the admiral's enemies; the very men whom he had been sent out to judge. These letters were full of civilities and promises of favour†.

To prevent any mischief which might arise from the licenses and indulgences so prodigally granted by Bobadilla, Columbus published, by word and letter, that the powers assumed by him could not be valid, nor his licenses availing, as he himself held superior powers, granted to him in perpe-

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\* Letter of Columb. to the nurse of Prince Juan.

† Idem. Herrera, D. 1, L. 4, C. 9.

tuity by the crown ; which could no more be superseded in this instance, than they had been in that of Aguado.

For some short time, Columbus remained in this anxious and perplexed state of mind ; uncertain what line of conduct to pursue in so singular and unlooked-for a conjuncture. He was soon brought to a decision. Francisco Velasquez, deputy treasurer, and Juan de Trasierra, a Franciscan friar, arrived at Bonao, and delivered to him the royal letter of credence, signed by the sovereigns, on the 26th of May, 1499, in which they commanded him to give implicit faith and obedience to Bobadilla ; and they delivered to him, at the same time, a summons from the latter to appear immediately before him.

This laconic letter from the sovereigns struck at once at the root of all his dignity and power. He no longer made hesitation or demur, but complying with the peremptory summons of Bobadilla, departed almost alone and unattended for St. Domingo\*.

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\* Herrera, D. 1, L. 4, C. 9. Letter to nurse of Prince Juan.

## CHAPTER IV.

COLUMBUS AND HIS BROTHERS ARRESTED, AND SENT TO  
SPAIN IN CHAINS.

1500. THE tidings that a new governor had arrived, and that Columbus was in disgrace, and was to be sent home in chains, circulated rapidly through the Vega; and the colonists hastened from all parts to St. Domingo, to make interest with Bobadilla. It was soon perceived that there was no surer way than that of vilifying his predecessor. Bobadilla felt that he had taken a rash step in seizing upon the government, and that his own safety required the conviction of Columbus. He listened eagerly, therefore, to all accusations, public or private; and welcome was he who could bring any charge, however extravagant, against the admiral and his brothers.

Hearing that the admiral was on his way to the city, he made a bustle of preparation and armed the troops, affecting to believe a rumour, that Columbus had called upon the caciques of the Vega to aid him with their subjects in a resistance to the commands of government. No grounds appear for this absurd report, which was probably invented to give a colouring of precaution to subsequent measures of violence and insult. The admiral's brother Don Diego was seized, thrown in irons, and confined on board of a caravel, without any reason being assigned for his imprisonment.

In the meantime Columbus pursued his journey to St. Domingo, travelling in a lonely manner, without guards or retinue. Most of his people were with the adelantado, and he had declined being attended by the remainder. He had heard of the rumours of his hostile intentions ; and, although he knew that violence was threatened to his person, he came in this simple and confiding way to manifest his pacific feelings, and to remove all suspicion\*.

No sooner did Bobadilla hear of his arrival, than he gave orders to put him in irons, and confine him in the fortress. This outrage to a person of such dignified and venerable appearance, and such eminent merit, seemed for the time to shock even his enemies. When the irons were brought, every one present shrunk from the task of putting them on him, either from a sentiment of compassion at so great a reverse of fortune, or out of a habitual reverence for his person. To fill the measure of ingratitude meted out to him, it was one of his own domestics, "a graceless and shameless cook," says Las Casas, "who, with unwashed front, applied to him the manacles, as though he were serving him with choice and savoury viands. I knew the fellow," adds the venerable historian, "and I think his name was Espinosa."

Columbus conducted himself with characteristic magnanimity, under the injuries heaped upon him. There is a noble scorn which swells and supports the heart, and silences the tongue of the truly great, when enduring the insults of the unworthy. Columbus could not stoop to deprecate the arrogance of a weak and violent man like Bobadilla. He looked beyond this shallow agent, and all his petty tyranny, to the sovereigns who had employed him. It was their injustice,

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\* Las Casas, Hist. Ind. L. 1, C. 180.



and their ingratitude alone that could wound his spirit ; and he felt assured that when the truth came to be known, they would blush to find how greatly they had wronged him. With this proud assurance he bore all present indignities in silence.

Bobadilla, although he had the admiral and Don Diego in his power, and had secured the venal populace, yet felt insecure and anxious. The adelantado, with an armed force under his command, was still in the distant province of Xaragua, in pursuit of the rebels. Knowing his soldierlike and determined spirit, he feared he might take some violent measure, when he should hear of the ignominious treatment and imprisonment of his brothers. He doubted whether any order from himself would have any effect, except to exasperate the stern Don Bartholomew. He sent a demand therefore to Columbus to write to his brother, requesting him to repair peaceably to St. Domingo, and forbidding him to execute the persons he held in confinement. Columbus readily complied. He exhorted his brother to submit quietly to the authority of his sovereigns, and to endure all present wrongs and indignities ; under the confidence that when they arrived at Castile every thing would be explained and redressed\*.

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\* Peter Martyr mentions, as a vulgar rumour of the day, that the admiral not knowing what might happen, wrote a letter in cipher to the adelantado, urging him to come, with arms in his hands, to prevent any violence that might be contrived against him. That the adelantado advanced, in effect, with his armed force ; but having the imprudence to proceed some distance ahead of it, was surprised by the governor, before his men could come to his succour ; and that the letter in cipher had been sent to Spain. This must have been one of the groundless rumours of the day, circulated to prejudice the public mind. Nothing of the kind appears among

On receiving this letter Don Bartholomew immediately complied. Relinquishing his command, he hastened peacefully to St. Domingo, and on arriving experienced the same treatment with his brothers, being put in irons and confined on board of a caravel. They were kept separate from each other, and no communication permitted between them. Bobadilla did not see them himself, nor did he allow others to visit them, but kept them in ignorance of the cause of their imprisonment, the crimes with which they were charged, and the process that was going on against them\*.

It has been questioned whether Bobadilla really had authority for the arrest and imprisonment of the admiral and his brotherst; and whether such violence and indignity was,

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the charges in the inquest made by Bobadilla; and which was seen and extracts made from it by Las Casas for his history. It is in fact in total contradiction to the statements of Las Casas, Herrera, and Fernando Columbus.

\* Charlevoix, in his history of St. Domingo, (Lib. 3, p. 199,) states that the process against Columbus was conducted in writing; that written charges were sent to him, to which he replied in the same way. This is contrary to the statements of Las Casas, Herrera, and Fernando Columbus. The admiral himself, in his letter to the nurse of Prince John, after relating the manner in which he and his brothers had been thrown in irons—and confined separately, without being visited by Bobadilla, or permitted to see any other person—expressly adds: “I make oath that I do not know for what I am imprisoned.” Again, in a letter written some time afterwards from Jamaica, he says—“I was taken and thrown with two brothers in a ship, loaded with irons, with little clothing, and much ill-treatment, without being summoned or convicted by justice.”

† Herrera, D. 1, L. 4, C. 10. Oviedo, Cronica, L. 3, C. 6.

in any case, contemplated by the sovereigns. He may have fancied himself empowered to do so, by the clause in the letter of instructions, dated March 21st, 1499, in which, speaking of the rebellion of Roldan, he is authorized "to *seize the persons and sequester the property* of those who appeared to be culpable, and then to proceed against them and against the absent with the highest civil and criminal penalties." This evidently had reference to the persons of Roldan and his followers, who were then in arms, and against whom Columbus had sent home complaints; and this, by a violent construction, Bobadilla seems to have wrested into an authority for seizing the person of the admiral himself. In fact, in the whole course of his proceedings, he reversed and confounded the order of his instructions. His first step should have been to proceed against the rebels; this he made the last. His last step should have been, in case of ample evidence against the admiral, to have superseded him in office; and this he made the first, without waiting for evidence. Having predetermined, from the very outset, that Columbus was in the wrong; by the same rule, he had to presume that all the opposite parties were in the right. It became indispensable to his own justification to inculcate the admiral and his brothers; and the rebels he had been sent to judge, became, by this singular perversion of rule, necessary and cherished evidences, to criminate those against whom they had rebelled.

The intentions of the crown, however, are not to be vindicated at the expense of its miserable agent. If proper respect had been felt for the rights and dignities of Columbus, Bobadilla would never have been intrusted with powers so extensive, undefined and discretionary; nor would he have dared to proceed to such lengths, with such rudeness

and precipitation, had he not felt assured that it would not be displeasing to the jealous-minded Ferdinand.

The old scenes of the time of Aguado were now renewed with tenfold virulence, and the old charges revived, with others still more extravagant. From the early and never to be forgotten outrage upon Castilian pride, of compelling hidalgos, in a time of emergency, to labour in the construction of works necessary to the public safety, down to the recent charge of levying war against the government; there was not a hardship, misfortune, abuse or sedition in the island, that was not imputed to the misdeeds of Columbus and his brothers. Beside the usual accusations, of inflicting oppressive labour, unnecessary tasks, painful restrictions, short allowances of food, and cruel punishments, upon the Spaniards; and waging unjust wars against the natives; they were now charged with preventing the conversion of the latter, that they might send them slaves to Spain, and profit by their sale. This last charge, so contrary to the pious feelings of the admiral, was founded on his having objected to the baptism of certain Indians of mature age, until they could be instructed in the doctrines of Christianity; justly considering it an abuse of that holy sacrament to administer it thus blindly\*.

Columbus was charged, also, with having secreted pearls, and other precious articles, collected in his voyage along the coast of Paria, and of keeping the sovereigns in ignorance of the nature of his discoveries there, in order to exact new privileges from them. Yet it was notorious that he had sent home specimens of the pearls, and journals and charts of his voyage, by which others had been enabled to pursue his track.

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\* Muñoz, *Hist. N. Mundo*—Part unpublished.

Even the late tumults, now that the rebels were admitted as evidence, were all turned into matters of accusation. They were represented as spirited and loyal resistance to tyranny exercised upon the colonists and the natives. The well-merited punishments inflicted upon certain of the ringleaders, were cited as proofs of a cruel and revengeful disposition, and a secret hatred of Spaniards. Bobadilla believed, or affected to believe, all these charges. He had, in a manner, made the rebels his confederates in the ruin of Columbus. It was become a common cause with them. He could no longer, therefore, conduct himself towards them as a judge. Guevara, Requelme, and their fellow convicts, were discharged almost without the form of a trial; and it is even said were received into favour and countenance. Roldan, from the very first, had been treated with confidence by Bobadilla, and honoured with his correspondence. All the others, whose conduct had drawn upon them the frowns of justice, received either a special acquittal, or a general pardon. It was enough to have been opposed in any way to Columbus, to obtain full justification in the eyes of Bobadilla.

The latter had now collected a weight of testimony, and produced a cloud of witnesses sufficient, as he conceived, to ensure the condemnation of the prisoners, and his own continuance in command. He determined, therefore, to send the admiral and his brothers home in chains, in the vessels which were ready for sea, transmitting at the same time the inquest taken in their case, and writing private letters, enforcing the charges made against them, and advising that Columbus should, on no account, be restored to the command which he had so shamefully abused.

St. Domingo now swarmed with miscreants just delivered from the dungeon and the gibbet. It was a perfect jubilee

of triumphant villany and dastard malice. Every base spirit, which had been awed into obsequiousness by Columbus and his brothers when in power, now started up to revenge itself upon them when in chains. The most injurious slanders were loudly proclaimed in the streets; insulting pasquinades and inflammatory libels were posted up at the corners; and horns were blown in the neighbourhood of their prisons, to taunt them with the exultings of the rabble\*. When these rejoicings of his enemies reached him in the dungeon in which he was confined, and Columbus reflected on the inconsiderate violence already exhibited by Bobadilla, he knew not how far his rashness and confidence might carry him, and began to entertain apprehensions for his life.

The vessels being ready to make sail, Alonzo de Villejo was appointed to take charge of the prisoners, and conduct them to Spain. He was an officer who had been brought up by an uncle of Fonseca, was in the employ of that bishop, and had come out with Bobadilla. The latter instructed him, on arriving at Cadiz, to deliver his prisoners into the hands of Fonseca, or of his uncle, thinking thereby to give the malignant prelate a triumphant gratification. This circumstance gave weight with many to an assertion which had been made, that Bobadilla was secretly instigated and encouraged to his violent measures by Fonseca, and was promised his protection and influence at court, in case of any complaints of his conduct†.

Villejo undertook the office assigned him, but he discharged it in a more generous manner than was intended. "This Alonzo de Villejo," says the worthy Las Casas,

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\* Hist del Almirante, C. 86.

† Las Casas, Hist. Ind. L. 1, C. 180. MS.

"was a hidalgo of honourable character, and my particular friend." He certainly showed himself superior to the low malignity of his patrons. When he arrived with a guard to conduct the admiral from the prison to the ship, he found him in chains, in a state of silent despondency. So violently had he been treated, and so savage were the passions let loose against him, that he feared he should be sacrificed without an opportunity of being heard, and his name go down sullied and dishonoured to posterity. When he beheld the officer enter with the guard, he thought it was to conduct him to the scaffold. "Villejo," said he mournfully, "whither are you taking me?" "To the ship, your excellency, to embark," replied the other. "To embark!" repeated the admiral earnestly; "Villejo! do you speak the truth?" "By the life of your excellency," replied the honest officer, "it is true." With these words the admiral was comforted, and as one restored from death to life. Nothing can be more touching and expressive than this little colloquy, recorded by the venerable Las Casas, who doubtless had it from the lips of his friend Villejo.

The caravels set sail early in October, bearing off Columbus, shackled like the vilest of culprits, amidst the hoots, and scoffs, and shouts of a miscreant rabble, who took a brutal joy in heaping insults on his venerable head, and, as it were, sent curses after him from the shores of the island he had so recently given to mankind. Fortunately the voyage was favourable and of but moderate duration, and was rendered less disagreeable by the conduct of those to whom he was given in custody. The worthy Villejo, though in the service of Fonseca, felt deeply moved at the unworthy

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\* Las Casas, Hist. Ind. L. 1, C. 180.

treatment of Columbus. The master of the caravel, Andreas Martin, was equally grieved : they both treated the admiral with profound respect and assiduous attention. They would have taken off his irons, but to this he would not consent. "No!" said he proudly, "their majesties commanded me by letter to submit to whatever Bobadilla should order in their name ; by their authority he has put upon me these chains: I will wear them until they shall order them to be taken off, and I will preserve them afterwards as relics and memorials of the reward of my services."

"He did so," adds his son Fernando, "I saw them always hanging in his cabinet, and he requested that when he died they might be buried with him\*!"

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\* Hist. del Almirante, Cap. 86.





**LIFE AND VOYAGES**  
**OF**  
**CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS.**

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**BOOK XIV.**

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**CHAPTER I.**

**SENSATION IN SPAIN ON THE ARRIVAL OF COLUMBUS  
IN IRONS—HIS APPEARANCE AT COURT.**

**1500.** THE arrival of Columbus at Cadiz, a prisoner, and in chains, produced almost as great a sensation as his triumphant return from his first voyage. It was one of those striking and obvious facts which speak to the feelings of the multitude, and preclude the necessity of reflection. No one stopped to inquire into the case. It was sufficient to be told that Columbus was brought home in irons from the world he had discovered. A general burst of indignation arose in Cadiz, and its neighbouring city Seville, which was immediately echoed throughout all Spain. If the ruin of Columbus had been the intention of his enemies, they had defeated their object by their own violence. There was one of those sudden reactions, frequent in the public mind, when perse-

cution is pushed to an unguarded length. Those of the populace who had recently been loud in their clamour against Columbus, were now as loud in their reprobation of his treatment, and a strong sympathy was expressed against which it would have been odious for the government to contend.

The tidings of his arrival, and of the ignominious manner in which he had been brought, reached the court at Granada, and filled the halls of the Alhambra with murmurs of astonishment. Columbus, full of his wrongs, but ignorant how far they had been authorized by the sovereigns, had forbore to write to them. In the course of his voyage, however, he had penned a long letter to Donna Juana de la Torre, a lady of the court, high in favour with queen Isabella, who had been nurse to Prince Juan. This letter, on his arrival at Cadiz, Andreas Martin, the captain of the cavel, had permitted Columbus to send off privately by express; it arrived, therefore, before the process of Bobadilla was received. It was from this letter that the sovereigns derived their first intimation of his treatment\*. It contained a statement of the late transactions of the island, and of the wrongs he had suffered, written with his usual artlessness and energy. To specify the contents, would be but to recapitulate events already recorded. Some expressions, however, which burst from him in the warmth of his feelings, are worthy of being noted. "The slanders of worthless men (says he) have done me more injury than all my services have profited me." Speaking of the misrepresentations to which he was subjected, he observes, "such is the name I have acquired, that if I were to build hospitals and churches,

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\* Las Casas, Hist. Ind. L. 1, C. 182.

they would be called dens of robbers." After relating, in indignant terms, the conduct of Bobadilla, in seeking testimony respecting his administration from the very men who had rebelled against him; and throwing himself and his brothers in irons, without letting them know the offences with which they were charged: "I have been much aggrieved," he adds, "that a person should be sent out to investigate my conduct, who knew that if the inquest he sent home should be of a grave nature, he would remain in the government."

He complains that in forming an opinion of his administration, allowances had not been made for the extraordinary difficulties with which he had to contend, and the wild state of the country over which he had to rule. "I was judged," he observes, "as a governor who had been sent to take charge of a well-regulated city, under the dominion of long established laws, where there was no danger of every thing running to disorder and ruin; but I ought to be judged as a captain, sent to subdue a numerous and hostile people, of manners and religion opposite to ours, living, not in regular towns, but in forests and mountains. It ought to be considered that I have brought all these under subjection to their majesties, giving them dominion over another world, by which Spain, heretofore poor, has suddenly become rich. Whatever errors I may have fallen into, they were not with an evil intention; and I believe their majesties will credit what I say. I have known them to be merciful to those who have wilfully done them disservice; I am convinced that they will have still more indulgence for me, who have erred innocently or by compulsion, as they will hereafter be more fully informed; and I trust they will consider my great services, the advantages of which are every day more and more apparent."

When this letter was read to the noble-minded Isabella, and she found how grossly Columbus had been wronged, and the royal authority abused, her soul was filled with mingled sympathy and indignation. The tidings were confirmed by a letter from the alcaide or corregidor of Cadiz, into whose hands Columbus and his brothers had been delivered until the pleasure of their majesties should be known\*, and by another letter from Alonso de Villejo, expressed in terms accordant with his humane and honourable conduct towards his illustrious prisoner.

However Ferdinand might have secretly felt disposed towards Columbus, the momentary tide of public feeling was not to be resisted. He joined with his generous queen in her reprobation of the treatment of the admiral, and both sovereigns hastened to give evidence to the world, that his imprisonment had been without their authority, and contrary to their wishes. Without waiting to receive any process that might arrive from Bobadilla, they sent orders to Cadiz that the prisoners should be instantly set at liberty, and treated with all distinction. They wrote a letter to Columbus couched in terms of gratitude and affection, expressing their grief at all that he had suffered, and inviting him to court. They ordered at the same time that two thousand ducats should be advanced to defray his expenses†.

The loyal heart of Columbus was again lifted up, by this ample declaration of his sovereigns. He felt conscious of his integrity, and anticipated an immediate restitution of all his rights and dignities. He appeared at court in Granada,

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\* Oviedo Cronic. L. 3, C. 6.

† Las Casas, L. 1, C. 182. 2,000 ducats, or 2,846 dollars, equivalent to 8,538 dollars at the present day.

on the 17th of December, not as a man ruined and disgraced, but richly dressed, and attended by an honourable retinue. He was received by their majesties with unqualified favour and distinction. When the queen beheld this venerable man approach, and thought on all that he had deserved, and all that he had suffered, she was moved to tears. Columbus had borne up firmly against the rude conflicts of the world; he had endured with lofty scorn the injuries and insults of ignoble men; but he possessed strong and quick sensibility. When he found himself thus kindly received by his sovereigns, and beheld tears in the benign eyes of Isabella, his long suppressed feelings burst forth. He threw himself upon his knees, and for some time could not utter a word for the violence of his tears and sobbings\*.

Their majesties raised him from the ground, and endeavoured to reassure him by the most gracious expressions. As soon as he recovered self-possession, he entered into an eloquent and highminded vindication of his loyalty, and the zeal he had ever felt for the glory and advantage of the Spanish crown. If at any time he had erred, it was through inexperience in government, and the extraordinary difficulties by which he had been surrounded.

There needed no vindication on his part. The intemperance of his enemies had been his best advocate. He stood in presence of his sovereigns a deeply injured man; and it remained for them to vindicate themselves to the world from the charge of ingratitude towards their most deserving subject. They expressed their indignation at the proceedings of Bobadilla, which they disavowed as contrary to their in-

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\* Herrera, D. 1, L. 4, C. 10.

structions, and they promised that he should be immediately dismissed from his command.

In fact, no public notice was taken of the process sent home by Bobadilla, nor of the letters which had been written in support of it. The sovereigns took every occasion to treat Columbus with favour and distinction, assuring him that his grievances should be redressed, his property restored, and that he should be reinstated in all his privileges and dignities.

It was on the latter point that Columbus was chiefly solicitous. Mercenary considerations had but secondary weight in his mind. Glory had been the great object of his ambition; and he felt that as long as he remained suspended from his employments, a tacit censure rested on his name. He expected, therefore, that the moment the sovereigns should be satisfied of the rectitude of his conduct, they would be eager to make him amends; that a restitution of his viceroyalty would immediately take place, and he should return in triumph to St. Domingo. Here, however, he was doomed to experience the grand disappointment which threw a shadow over the remainder of his days. To account for this flagrant want of justice and gratitude in the crown, it is expedient to notice a variety of events which had materially affected the interests of Columbus in the eyes of the politic Ferdinand.

## CHAPTER II.

## CONTEMPORARY VOYAGES OF DISCOVERY.

THE general license granted by the Spanish sovereigns in 1495 to undertake voyages of discovery, had given rise to various expeditions by enterprising individuals, chiefly persons who had sailed with Columbus in his first voyages. The government, too poor to fit out many armaments itself, was pleased to have its territories thus extended, free of cost, and at the same time its treasury benefited by a share of one fourth or fifth of the proceeds of these voyages, which was reserved as a kind of duty to the crown. These expeditions had chiefly taken place while Columbus was under a cloud of imputation, and in partial disgrace with the sovereigns. His own charts and journals served as guides to the adventurers; and his magnificent accounts of Paria and the adjacent coasts had chiefly excited their cupidity.

Beside the expedition of Ojeda already noticed, in the course of which he had touched at Xaragua, one had been undertaken at the same time by Pedro Alonzo Niño, native of Moguer, an able pilot who had been with Columbus in the voyages to Cuba and Paria. Having obtained a license, he interested a rich merchant of Seville in the undertaking, who fitted out a caravel of fifty tons burthen, under condi-



tion that his brother, Christoval Guevra, should have the command. They sailed from the bar of Saltes a few days after Ojeda had sailed from Cadiz, in the spring of 1499, and arriving on the coast of Terra Firma, south of Paria, they ran along it for some distance, passed through the gulf, and thence west one hundred and thirty leagues, along the seaboard of the present republic of Colombia, visiting what was afterwards called the pearl coast. They landed in various places, disposed of their European trifles to immense profit, and returned with a large store of gold and pearls, having made, in their diminutive bark, one of the most extensive and lucrative voyages that had yet been accomplished.

About the same time, the Pimons, that family of bold and opulent navigators, fitted out an armament of four caravels at Palos, manned in a great measure by their own relatives and friends. Several experienced pilots embarked in it, who had been with Columbus to Paria, and it was commanded by Vicente Pinzon, who had been captain of a caravel in the squadron of the admiral on his first voyage.

Pinzon was a hardy and experienced seaman; and did not, like the others, follow closely in the track of Columbus. Sailing in December, 1499, he passed the Canary and Cape de Verd islands, standing southwest, until he lost sight of the polar star. Here he encountered a terrible storm, and was exceedingly perplexed and confounded by the new aspect of the heavens. Nothing was yet known of the southern hemisphere, nor of the beautiful constellation of the Cross, which in those regions has since supplied to mariners the place of the north star. The voyagers had expected to find at the south pole a star correspondent to that at the north. They were dismayed at beholding no guide of the kind; and

thought there must be some prominent swelling of the earth, which hid the pole from their view\*.

Pinzon continued on, however, with great intrepidity. On the 26th of January, 1500, he saw at a distance a great head-land, which he called Cape Santa Maria de la Consolacion; but which has since been named Cape St. Augustine. He landed and took possession of the country in the name of their Catholic Majesties; being on a part of the territories since called the Brazils. Standing westward from thence, he discovered the Maragnon, since called the river of Amazons, traversed the gulf of Paria, and continued across the Caribbean sea, and the gulf of Mexico, until he found himself among the Bahamas, where he lost two of his vessels on the rocks near the island of Jumeto. He returned to Palos in September; having added to his former laurels that of being the first European that had crossed the equinoctial line, in the western ocean; and of having discovered the famous kingdom of Brazil, from its commencement at the river Maragnon, to its most eastern point. As a reward for his achievements, power was granted to him to colonize and govern the lands which he had discovered, and which extended southward, from a little beyond the river of Maragnon to Cape St. Augustinet.

The little port of Palos, which had been so slow to furnish out the first squadron for Columbus, was now continually agitated by the passion for discovery. Shortly after the sailing of Pinzon, another expedition was fitted out there, by Diego de Lepe, a native of the place, and was manned by

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\* P. Martyr, Decad. 1, L. 9.

† Herrera, D. 1, L. 4, C. 12. Muñoz, Hist. N. Mundo—Part inedit.

his adventurous townsmen. He sailed in the same direction with Pinzon ; but he discovered more of the southern continent than any other voyager of the day, or for twelve years afterwards. He doubled Cape St. Augustine, and ascertained that the coast beyond ran to the southwest. He landed and performed the usual ceremonies of taking possession in the name of the Spanish sovereigns, and in one place carved their names on a magnificent tree, of such enormous magnitude, that seventeen men with their hands joined, could not embrace the trunk. What enhanced the merit of his discoveries was that he had never sailed with Columbus. He had with him, however, several skilful pilots, who had accompanied the admiral in his voyages\*.

Another expedition of two vessels sailed from Cadiz in October, 1500, under command of Rodrigo Bastides of Seville. He explored the coast of Terra Firma,\* passing Cape de la Vela, the western limits of the previous discoveries on the main land, continuing on to a port since called the Retreat, where afterwards was founded the seaport of Nombre de Dios. His vessels being nearly destroyed by the worms, which abound in those seas, he had great difficulty in reaching Xaragua in Hispaniola, where he lost his two caravels, and proceeded with his crew by land to St. Domingo. Here he was seized and imprisoned by Bobadilla, under pretext that he had traded for gold with the natives of Xaraguat.

Such was the swarm of Spanish expeditions engendered by the enterprizes of Columbus ; but there were others undertaken by other nations. In the year 1497, Sebastian Cabot, son of

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\* Las Casas, Hist. Ind. l. 2, C. 2. Muñoz—Part unpublished.

† Idem.

a Venetian merchant resident in Bristol, sailing in the service of Henry VII of England, navigated to the northern seas of the new world. Adopting the idea of Columbus, he was in quest of the shores of Cathay, and hoped to find a northwest passage to India. In this voyage he discovered Newfoundland, coasted Labrador to the 56th degree of north latitude, and then returning, ran down southwest to the Floridas, when, his provisions beginning to fail, he returned to England\*. But vague and scanty notices exist concerning this voyage, which is important as including the first discovery of the continent of the new world.

The discoveries of rival nations, however, which most excited the attention and jealousy of the Spanish crown, were those of the Portuguese. Vasquez de Gama, "a man of rank, of heart and of hand†," had at length accomplished the great design of the late prince Henry of Portugal, and by doubling the Cape of Good Hope, in the year 1497, had opened the long sought-for route to India.

Immediately after Gama's return, a fleet of thirteen sail was fitted out to visit the magnificent countries of which he brought accounts. This expedition sailed on the 9th of March, 1500, for Calicut, under the command of Pedro Alvarez de Cabral. Having passed the Cape de Verd islands, he sought to avoid the calms prevalent on the coast of Guinea, by stretching far to the west. Suddenly on the 25th of April he came in sight of land, unknown to any one in his squadron; for as yet they had not heard of the discoveries of Pinzon and Lepe. He at first supposed it to be some great island; but after coasting it for some time, he be-

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\* Hackluyt, *Collect. of Voyages*, vol. 3. p. 7.

† Lafiteau, *Conquests des Portugais*, L. 2.

came persuaded that it must be part of a continent. Having ranged along it somewhat beyond the fifteenth degree of southern latitude, he landed at a harbour, which he called Porto Seguro, and taking possession of the country for the crown of Portugal, dispatched a ship to Lisbon with the important tidings\*. In this way did the Brazils come into the possession of Portugal, being to the eastward of the conventional line settled with Spain as the boundary of their respective territories. Dr. Robertson, in recording this voyage of Cabral, concludes with one of his just and elegant remarks. "Columbus' discovery of the new world," he observes, "was the effort of an active genius, guided by experience, and acting upon a regular plan, executed with no less courage than perseverance. But from this adventure of the Portuguese, it appears that chance might have accomplished that great design, which it is now the pride of human reason to have formed and perfected. If the sagacity of Columbus had not conducted mankind to America, Cabral, by a fortunate accident, might have led them, a few years later, to the knowledge of that extensive continent†."

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\* Lafiteau, L. 2.

† Robertson, Hist. America, Book 2.

## CHAPTER III.

NICHOLAS DE OVANDO APPOINTED TO SUPERSEDE BO-  
BADILLA.

1501. THE numerous discoveries briefly noticed in the preceding chapter, had produced a powerful effect upon the mind of Ferdinand. His ambition, his avarice, and his jealousy, were equally inflamed. He beheld boundless regions, teeming with all kinds of riches, daily opening before the enterprizes of his subjects; but he beheld at the same time other nations launching forth in competition, emulous to share with him this golden world which he was eager to monopolize. The expeditions of the English, and the accidental discovery of the Brazils by the Portuguese, caused him much uneasiness. To secure his possession of the continent, he determined to establish local governments or commands, in the most important places; all to be subject to a general government seated at St. Domingo, which was to be the metropolis.

With these considerations, the government heretofore granted to Columbus had risen vastly in importance; and while the restitution of it was the more desirable in his eyes, it became more and more a matter of repugnance to the selfish and jealous monarch. He had long repented having

vested such great powers and prerogatives in any subject, particularly in a foreigner. At the time of granting them he had no anticipation of such boundless countries to be placed under his command. He appeared almost to consider himself outwitted by Columbus in the arrangement he had made; and every succeeding discovery, instead of increasing his grateful sense of the obligation, only made him repine the more at the growing magnitude of the reward. He had at length, however, in the affair of Bobadilla, got the door closed, apparently through the violence of another, between Columbus and his high office; and the wary monarch secretly determined that it never again should be opened.

Perhaps Ferdinand may really have entertained doubts as to the innocence of Columbus, with respect to the various charges made against him. He may have doubted also the strength of his loyalty, being a stranger, when he should find himself firm in his command, at a great distance from the parent country, with immense and opulent regions under his control. Columbus himself, in his letters, alludes to reports circulated by his enemies, that he intended either to set up an independent sovereignty, or to deliver his discoveries into the hands of other potentates; and he appears to fear that these slanders may have made some impression on the mind of Ferdinand. But there was one other consideration which had no less force with the monarch, in withholding this great act of justice—Columbus was no longer indispensable to him. He had made his great discovery. He had struck out the route to the new world, and now any one could follow it. A number of able navigators had sprung up under his auspices, and acquired experience in his voyages. They were daily besieging the throne with offers to fit out

enterprizes at their own cost, and to yield a share of the profits to the crown. Why should he, therefore, confer princely dignities and prerogatives for what men were daily offering to perform gratuitously!

Such, from his after conduct, appears to have been the jealous and selfish policy which actuated Ferdinand in forbearing to reinstate Columbus in those dignities and privileges which had so solemnly been granted to him by treaty, and which it was acknowledged that he had never forfeited by misconduct. This deprivation, however, was declared to be only temporary; and plausible reasons were given for the delay in his reappointment. It was observed, that the elements of those violent factions, which had recently been in arms against him, yet existed in the island; his immediate return might produce fresh exasperation; his personal safety would be endangered, and the island again thrown into confusion. Though Bobadilla, therefore, was to be immediately dismissed from command, it was deemed advisable to send out some officer of talent and discretion to supersede him; who might dispassionately investigate the recent disorders, remedy the abuses which had arisen, and expel all dissolute and factious persons from the colony. He should hold the government for two years, by which time it was trusted that all angry passions would be allayed, and turbulent individuals removed. Columbus might then resume the command with comfort to himself and advantage to the crown. With these reasons, and the promise which accompanied them, Columbus was obliged to content himself. There can be no doubt that they were sincere on the part of Isabella, and that it was her intention to reinstate him in the full enjoyment of his rights and dignities, after this apparently necessary suspension. Ferdinand, however, by his



subsequent conduct, has forfeited all claim to any favourable opinion of the kind.

The person chosen to supersede Bobadilla was Don Nicholas de Ovando, commander of Lares, of the order of Alcantara. He is described as of the middle size, fair complexioned, with a red beard, and a modest look, yet a tone of authority. He was fluent in speech, and gracious and courteous in his manners. A man of great prudence, says Las Casas, and capable of governing many people, but not of governing Indians, on whom he inflicted incalculable injuries. He professed great veneration for justice, was an enemy to avarice, yet sober in his mode of living, and of such humility, that when he rose afterwards to be grand commander of the order of Alcantara, he would never allow himself to be addressed by the title of respect attached to it\*. Such is the picture drawn of him by historians; but his conduct, in several important instances, is in direct contradiction to it. He appears to have been plausible and subtle, as well as fluent and courteous; his humility to have covered a great love of command; and in his transactions with Columbus, he was certainly both ungenerous and unjust.

The various arrangements to be made, according to the new plan of colonial government, delayed for some time the departure of Ovando. In the meantime, every arrival brought intelligence of the disastrous state of the island, under the maleadministration of Bobadilla. He had commenced his career by an opposite policy to that of Columbus. Imagining that rigorous rule had been the rock on which his predecessor had split, he sought to conciliate the public by all kinds of indulgence. Having at the very

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\* Las Casas, Hist. Ind. L. 2, C. 3.

outset relaxed the reigns of justice and morality, he lost all command over the community; and such disorder and licentiousness ensued, that many even of the opponents of Columbus looked back with regret upon the strict but wholesome rule of himself and the adelantado.

Bobadilla was not so much a bad, as an imprudent and a weak man. He had not foreseen the dangerous excesses to which his policy would lead. Rash in grasping authority, he was feeble and temporizing in the exercise of it. He could not look beyond the present exigency; one dangerous indulgence granted to the colonists called for another; each was ceded in its turn, and thus he went on from error to error; showing that in government there is as much danger to be apprehended from a weak as from a bad man.

He had sold the farms and estates of the crown at low prices; observing that it was not the wish of the monarchs to enrich themselves by them, but that they should redound to the profit of their subjects. He granted universal permission to work the mines, paying only an eleventh of the produce to government. To prevent any diminution in the revenue, it became necessary, of course, to increase the quantity of gold collected. He obliged the caciques, therefore, to furnish each Spaniard with Indians, to assist him both in the labours of the field and of the mine. To carry this into more complete effect, he made an enumeration of all the natives of the island; then reduced them into classes, and distributed them, according to his favour or caprice, among the colonists. The latter, at his suggestion, associated themselves in partnerships of two persons each, who were to assist one another with their respective capitals and Indians; one superintending the labours of the field, and the other the search for gold. The only injunction of Bobadilla was

to produce large quantities of ore. He had one saying continually in his mouth, which shows the pernicious and temporizing principle upon which he acted: "make the most of your time," he would say, "there is no knowing how long it may last:" alluding to the possibility of his being speedily recalled. The colonists acted up to his advice; and so hard did they drive the poor natives, that the eleventh yielded more revenue to the crown than had ever been produced by the third under the government of Columbus.

In the meantime the unhappy natives suffered under all kinds of cruelties from their inhuman taskmasters. Little used to labour, feeble of constitution, and accustomed in their beautiful and luxuriant island, to a life of ease and freedom, they sunk under the toils imposed upon them, and the severities by which they were enforced.

Las Casas gives an indignant picture of the capricious tyranny exercised over the Indians by worthless Spaniards, many of whom had been transported convicts from the dungeons of Castile. These wretches, who in their own country had been the vilest among the vile, here assumed the tone of grand cavaliers. They insisted upon being attended by trains of servants. They took the daughters and female relatives of caciques for their domestics, or rather for their concubines; nor did they limit themselves in number. When they travelled, instead of using the horses and mules with which they were provided, they obliged the natives to transport them upon their shoulders in litters or hamaca, with others attending to hold umbrellas of palm leaves over their heads to keep off the sun, and fans of feathers to cool them; and Las Casas affirms that he has seen the backs and shoulders of the unfortunate Indians who bore the litters raw and bleeding from the task. When these arrogant upstarts ar-

rived at an Indian village, they consumed and lavished away the provisions of the inhabitants, seizing upon whatever pleased their caprice, and obliging the cacique and his subjects to dance before them for their amusement. Their very pleasures were attended with cruelty. They never addressed the natives but by the most degrading terms; and on the least offence, or the least freak of ill humour, they inflicted blows and lashes, and even death itself\*.

Such is but a faint picture of the evils which sprung up under the feeble rule of Bobadilla; and which are darkly described by Las Casas, from actual observation, as he visited the island just at the close of his administration. Bobadilla had trusted to the immense amount of gold, wrung from the miseries of the natives, to atone for all errors, and to secure favour with the sovereigns; but he had totally mistaken his course. The abuses of his government soon reached the royal ear, and above all, the wrongs of the natives reached the benevolent heart of Isabella. Nothing was more calculated to arouse her indignation, and she urged the speedy departure of Ovando to put a stop to these enormities.

In conformity to the plan already mentioned, the government of Ovando extended over the islands and Terra Firma, of which Hispaniola was to be the metropolis. He was to enter upon the exercise of his powers immediately on his arrival, by procuration, sending home Bobadilla by the return of the fleet. He was instructed to inquire diligently into the late abuses, punishing the delinquents without favour or partiality, and removing all worthless persons from the island. He was to revoke immediately the license granted

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\* Las Casas, Hist. Ind. L. 2, C. 1. MS.

by Bobadilla for the general search after gold, it having been given without royal authority. He was to require for the crown a third of all that was collected, and one half of all that should be collected in future. He was empowered to build towns and fortresses, granting them the same privileges enjoyed by those of Spain, and obliging the Spaniards, and particularly the soldiers, to reside in them, instead of scattering themselves about the island. Among many sage provisions, there were others injurious and illiberal, characteristic of an age when the principles of commerce were but little understood, but which were continued by Spain long after the rest of the world had discarded them as the errors of dark and unenlightened times. The crown monopolized the trade of the colonies. No one could carry merchandise there on his own account. A royal factor was appointed, who was to be the sole merchant, through whom were to be obtained supplies of European articles. The crown reserved to itself, not only exclusive property in the mines, but in precious stones, and like objects of extraordinary value, and also in dye-woods. No strangers, and above all, no Moors or Jews, were permitted to establish themselves in the island, or to go upon voyages of discovery. Such were some of the restrictions upon trade which Spain imposed upon her colonies, and which were followed up by others equally illiberal. Her commercial policy has been the scoff of modern times ; but may not the present restrictions on trade, imposed by the most intelligent nations, be equally the wonder and the jest of future ages ?

Isabella was particularly careful in providing for the kind treatment of the Indians. Ovando was ordered to assemble the caciques, and declare to them that the sovereigns took them and their people under their especial protection. They

were merely to pay tribute like other subjects of the crown, and it was to be collected with the utmost mildness and gentleness. Great pains were to be taken in their religious instruction, for which purpose twelve Franciscan friars were sent out, with a prelate named Antonio de Espinal, a venerable and pious man. This was the first formal introduction of the Franciscan order into the new world\*.

All these precautions with respect to the natives were defeated by one unwary provision. It was permitted that the Indians might be compelled to work in the mines, and in other employments; but this was limited to the royal service. They were to be engaged as hired labourers, and punctually paid. This provision led to great abuses and oppressions; for, under whatever pretext the Spaniards gained control over the services of the natives, they were sure to enforce it to their misery and destruction.

But while the sovereigns were making regulations for the relief of the Indians, with that inconsistency frequent in human judgment, they encouraged a gross invasion of the rights and the welfare of another race of human beings. Among their various decrees on this occasion, we find the first trace of negro slavery in the new world. It was permitted to carry to the colonies negro slaves, born among Christians†, that is to say, slaves born in Seville and other parts of Spain, the children and descendants of natives brought from the Atlantic coasts of Africa, with which a traf-

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\* Las Casas, Hist. Ind. L. 2, C. 3. MS.

† Que se dexaron pasar esclavos negros, nacidos en poder de Christianos, i que recibiese en quanta á los oficiales de la real Hacienda, lo que por sus firmas se pagase. Herrera, Hist. Ind. Decad. 1, L. 4, C. 12.

fic of the kind had for some time been carried on by the Spaniards and Portuguese. There are signal events in the course of history; which sometimes bear the appearance of temporal judgments. It is a fact worthy of observation, that Hispaniola, the place where this flagrant sin against nature and humanity was first introduced into the new world, has been the first to exhibit an awful retribution.

Amidst the various concerns which claimed the attention of the sovereigns, the interests of Columbus were not forgotten. Ovando was ordered to examine into all his accounts, without undertaking to pay them off. He was to ascertain the damages he had sustained by his imprisonment, the interruption of his privileges, and the confiscation of his effects. All the property confiscated by Bobadilla was to be restored, or if sold, to be made good. If it had been employed in the royal service, Columbus was to be indemnified out of the treasury; if Bobadilla had appropriated it to his own use, he was to account for it out of his private purse. Equal care was to be taken to indemnify the brothers of the admiral for the losses they had wrongfully suffered by their arrest.

Columbus was likewise to receive the arrears of his revenues, and the same were to be punctually paid to him in future. He was to be permitted to have a factor resident in the island, to be present at the smelting and marking of the gold, to collect his dues, and in short to attend to all his affairs. To this office he appointed Alonzo Sanchez de Carvajal, whose probity he had so well tried in his negotiations with Roldan; and the sovereigns commanded that this agent should always be treated with great respect.

The fleet appointed to convey Ovando to his government was the largest that had yet sailed to the new world. It

consisted of thirty sail, five of them from ninety to one hundred and fifty tons burthen, twenty-four caravels of from thirty to ninety, and one bark of twenty-five tons\*. The number of souls embarked in this fleet was about twenty-five hundred, many of them persons of rank and distinction, with their families.

That Ovando might appear with dignity in his new office, he was allowed to use silks, brocades, precious stones, and other articles of sumptuous attire, which were prohibited at that time in Spain, in consequence of the ruinous ostentation of the nobility. He was permitted also to have seventy-two esquires as his body guard, ten of whom were horsemen. With this expedition, sailed Don Alphonso Maldonado, appointed as alguazil mayor, or chief justice, in place of Roñdan, who was to be sent to Spain. There were artisans of various kinds; a physician, surgeon, and apothecary, and seventy-three married men, with their families, all of respectable character, destined to be distributed in four towns, and to enjoy peculiar privileges, that they might form the basis of a sound and useful population. They were to displace as many of the idle and dissolute, who were to be sent from the island. This excellent measure had been especially urged and entreated by Columbus. There was also live stock, artillery, arms, munitions of all kinds, every thing in short that was required for the supply of the island.

Such was the style in which Ovando, a favourite of Ferdinand, and a native subject of rank, was fitted out to enter

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\* Muñoz—part inedit. Las Casas says the fleet consisted of thirty-two sail. He states from memory, however: Muñoz from Documents.

† Muñoz, Hist. N. Mundo—part inedit.



upon the government withheld from Columbus. The fleet put to sea on the 13th of February, 1502. In the early part of the voyage it was encountered by a terrible storm; one of the ships foundered, with one hundred and twenty passengers; the others were obliged to throw overboard every thing that was on deck, and were completely scattered. The shores of Spain were strewed with articles from the fleet, and a rumour spread that all the ships had perished. When this reached the sovereigns, they were so overcome with grief that they shut themselves up for eight days, and admitted no one to their presence. The rumour proved to be incorrect. But one ship was lost. The others assembled again at the island of Gomera, in the Canaries, and pursuing their voyage arrived at St. Domingo on the 15th of April\*.

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\* Las Casas, H. Ind. L. 2, C. 3. MS.

## CHAPTER IV.

PROPOSITION OF COLUMBUS RELATIVE TO THE RECOVERY  
OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE.

1500. COLUMBUS remained in the city of Granada for 1501. upwards of nine months, endeavouring to extricate his affairs from the confusion into which they had been thrown by the rash conduct of Bobadilla, and soliciting the restoration of his offices and dignities. During this time he constantly experienced the smiles and attentions of the sovereigns, and promises were repeatedly made him that he should ultimately be reinstated in all his honours. He had long since, however, ascertained the great interval that may exist between promise and performance in a court. Had he been of a morbid and repining spirit, he had ample food for misanthropy. He beheld the career of glory which he had opened, thronged by favoured adventurers; he witnessed preparations making to convey, with unusual pomp, a successor to that government from which he had been so wrongfully and rudely ejected; in the meanwhile, his own career was interrupted, and, as far as public employ is a gauge of royal favour, he remained apparently in disgrace.

The sanguine temperament of Columbus, however, was not long to be depressed; if checked in one direction it broke forth in another. His visionary imagination was as

an internal light, which in the darkest times repelled all outward gloom, and filled his mind with splendid images and glorious speculations. In this time of evil his vow to furnish, within seven years from the time of his discovery, fifty thousand foot soldiers and five thousand horse, for the recovery of the holy sepulchre, recurred to his memory with peculiar force. The time had elapsed, but the vow remained unfulfilled, and the means to perform it had failed him. The new world, with all its treasures, had as yet produced expense instead of profit; and so far from being in a situation to set armies on foot by his own contributions, he found himself without property, without power, and without employ.

Destitute of the means of accomplishing his pious intentions, he considered it his duty to incite the sovereigns to the enterprize; and he felt emboldened to do so, from having originally proposed it as the great object to which the profits of his discoveries should be dedicated. He set to work, therefore, with his accustomed zeal, to prepare arguments for the purpose. During the intervals of business he sought into the prophecies of the holy scriptures, the writings of the fathers, and all kinds of sacred and speculative sources, for mystic portents and revelations, which might be construed to bear upon the discovery of the new world, the conversion of the Gentiles, and the recovery of the holy sepulchre: three great events which he supposed to be predestined to succeed each other. These passages, with the assistance of a Carthusian friar, he arranged in order, illustrated by poetry, and collected into a manuscript volume, to be delivered to the sovereigns. He prepared, at the same time, a long letter, written with his usual fervour of spirit and simplicity of heart. It is one of those singular compositions which lay open the visionary part of his character,

and show the mystic and speculative reading with which he was accustomed to nurture his solemn and soaring imagination.

In this letter he urged their majesties to set on foot a crusade for the deliverance of Jerusalem from the power of the unbelievers. He entreated them not to reject his present advice as extravagant and impracticable, nor to heed the discredit that might be cast upon it by others; reminding them that his great scheme of discovery had originally been treated with similar contempt. He averred in the fullest manner his persuasion that from his earliest infancy he had been chosen by heaven for the accomplishment of those two great designs, the discovery of the new world, and the rescue of the holy sepulchre. For this purpose, in his tender years he had been guided by a divine impulse to embrace the profession of the sea; a mode of life, he observes, which inclines one to inquire into the mysteries of nature; and he had been gifted with a curious spirit to read all kinds of histories, cosmographies, and works of philosophy. In meditating upon these, his understanding had been opened by the deity, "as with a palpable hand;" so as to discover the navigation to the Indias; and he had been inflamed with ardour to undertake the enterprize. "Animated by this fire," he adds, "I came to your majesties. All who heard of my enterprize mocked at it; all the sciences I had acquired profited me nothing; seven years did I pass in your royal court, disputing the case with persons of great authority, and learned in all the arts, and in the end they decided that all was vain. In your majesties alone remained faith and constancy. Who will doubt that this light was from the holy scriptures, illumining you as well as myself with rays of marvellous clearness?"

These ideas, so repeatedly and solemnly and artlessly expressed, by a man of the fervent piety of Columbus, show how truly his discovery arose from the workings of his own mind, and not from information furnished by others. He considered it a divine intimation, and the fulfilment of what had been foretold by our Saviour and the prophets: still he regarded it but as a minor event preparatory to the great enterprize, the recovery of the holy sepulchre. He pronounced it a miracle effected by heaven to animate himself and others to that holy undertaking; and he assured their majesties, that if they had faith in his present, as in his former proposition, they would assuredly be rewarded with equally triumphant success. He conjured them not to heed the sneers of such as might scoff at him as one unlearned, as an ignorant mariner, a worldly man; reminding them that the holy spirit works not merely in the learned, but also in the ignorant; nay, that it reveals things to come not merely by rational beings, but by prodigies in animals, and by mystic signs in the air and in the heavens.

The enterprize here suggested by Columbus, however idle and extravagant it may appear in the present day, was in the temper of the times, and of the court to which it was proposed. The vein of mystic erudition by which it was enforced, likewise, was suited to an age when the reveries of the cloister still controlled the operations of the cabinet and the camp. The spirit of the crusades had not yet passed away. In the cause of the church, and at the instigation of its dignitaries, every cavalier was ready to draw his sword; and religion mingled a glowing and devoted enthusiasm with the ordinary excitement of warfare. Ferdinand was a religious bigot; and the devotion of Isabella went as near to bigotry as her liberal mind and magnanimous spirit would

permit. Both of the sovereigns were under the influence of ecclesiastical politicians, constantly guiding their enterprises in a direction to redound to the temporal power and glory of the church. The recent conquest of Granada had been considered a European crusade, and had gained to the sovereigns the surname of Catholic. It was natural to think of extending their sacred victories still further, and retaliating upon the infidels their domination of Spain, and their long triumphs over the cross. In fact, the Duke of Medina Sidonia had made a recent inroad into Barbary, in the course of which he had taken the city of Malilla, and his expedition had been pronounced a renewal of the holy wars against the Infidels in Africa\*.

There was nothing therefore in the proposition of Columbus that could be regarded as preposterous, considering the period and circumstances in which it was made, though it strongly illustrates his own enthusiastic and visionary character. It must be recollected that it was meditated in the courts of the Alhambra, among the splendid remains of Moorish grandeur, where but a few years before he had beheld the standard of the faith elevated in triumph above the symbols of infidelity. It appears to have been the offspring of one of those moods of high excitement, when, as has been observed, his soul was elevated by the contemplation of his

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\* Garibay, *Hist. España*, L. 19, C. 6.

Among the collections existing in the library of the late Prince Sebastian there is a folio, which among other things contains a paper or letter in which is a calculation of the probable expense of an army of twenty thousand men for the conquest of the holy land. It is dated in 1509 or 1510, and the handwriting appears to be of the same time.

great and glorious office; when he considered himself under divine inspiration, imparting the will of heaven, and fulfilling those high and holy purposes for which he had been predestined\*.

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\* Columbus was not singular in this belief: it was entertained by many of his zealous and learned admirers. The erudite lapidary, Jayme Ferrer, in the letter written to Columbus in 1495, at the command of the sovereigns, observes: "I see in this a great mystery. The divine and infallible providence sent the great St. Thomas from the west into the east, to manifest in India our holy and catholic faith; and you, Senior, he sent in an opposite direction, from the east unto the west, until you have arrived in the orient, into the extreme part of upper India, that the people may hear that which their ancestors neglected of the preaching of St. Thomas. Thus shall be accomplished what is written, *in omnem terram exivit sonus eorum.*" \* \* \* And again: "The office which you hold, Senior, places you in the light of an apostle and ambassador of God, sent by his divine judgment to make known his holy name in unknown lands." *Letra de Mossen Jayme Ferrer, &c.* Navarrete, Collection, T. 2, Doc. 68.

## CHAPTER V.

PREPARATIONS OF COLUMBUS FOR A FOURTH VOYAGE OF  
DISCOVERY.

1501. THE speculation relative to the recovery of the holy  
1502. sepulchre held but a temporary sway over the mind of Columbus. His thoughts soon returned with renewed ardour to their wonted channel. He became impatient of inaction, and soon conceived a leading object for another enterprize of discovery. The achievement of Vasco de Gama of the long attempted navigation to India by the Cape of Good Hope, was one of the signal events of the day. Pedro Alvarez Cabral following in his track, had made a most successful voyage, and returned with his vessels laden with the precious commodities of the east. The riches of Calicut were now the theme of every tongue; the trade in diamonds and precious stones from the mines of Hindostan; in pearls, gold, silver, amber, ivory and porcelain; in silken stuffs, costly woods, gums, aromatics, and spices of all kinds. The discoveries of the savage regions of the new world, as yet brought little revenue to Spain; but this route suddenly opened to the luxurious countries of the east, was pouring in immediate wealth upon Portugal.

Columbus was roused to generous emulation by these accounts. He now conceived the idea of a voyage in which, with his usual enthusiasm, he hoped to surpass not merely



the discovery of Vasco de Gama, but even those of his own previous expeditions. According to his own observations in his voyage to Paria, and the reports of other navigators, who had pursued the same route to a greater distance, it appeared that the coast of Terra Firma stretched far to the west. The southern coast of Cuba, which he considered a part of the Asiatic continent, stretched onwards towards the same point. The current which swept the Caribbean sea, must pass between those lands. He was persuaded therefore that there must be a strait existing somewhere thereabout, opening into the Indian sea. The situation in which he placed his conjectural strait, was somewhere about what is at present called the isthmus of Darien\*. Could he but discover such a passage, and thus link the new world he had discovered, with the opulent oriental regions of the old, he felt that he should make a magnificent close to his labours, and consummate this great object of his existence.

When Columbus unfolded his plan to the sovereigns, it was listened to with great attention. Certain of the royal council, it is said, endeavoured to throw difficulties in the way ; observing that the various exigencies of the times, and the low state of the royal treasury, rendered any new expedition highly inexpedient. They intimated also that Columbus ought not to be employed, until his good conduct in Hispaniola was satisfactorily established, by letters from Ovando. These narrow-minded suggestions failed in their aim. Isabella had implicit confidence in the integrity of

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\* Las Casas, L. 2, C. 4. Las Casas specifies the vicinity of Nombre de Dios as the place. Bastides had explored as far west as that place, and Columbus probably considered the strait as existing at no great distance beyond.

Columbus. As to the expense, she felt that while furnishing so powerful a fleet and splendid a retinue to Ovando, to take possession of his government, it would be ungenerous and ungrateful to refuse a few ships to the discoverer of the new world, to enable him to prosecute his illustrious enterprizes. As to Ferdinand, his cupidity was aroused at the idea of being soon put in possession of a more direct and safe route to those countries with which the crown of Portugal was opening so lucrative a trade. The project also would occupy the admiral for a considerable time, and, while it diverted him from claims of an inconvenient nature, would employ his talents in a way most beneficial to the crown. However the king might doubt his abilities as a legislator, he had the highest opinion of his skill and judgment as a navigator. If such a strait as the one supposed were really in existence, Columbus was, of all men in the world, the one to discover it. His proposition, therefore, was promptly acceded to; he was authorized to fit out an armament immediately; and repaired to Seville, in the autumn of 1501, to make the necessary preparations.

Though this substantial enterprize diverted his attention from his chimera for the recovery of the holy sepulchre, it still continued to haunt his mind. He left his manuscript collection of researches among the prophecies, in the hands of a devout friar, of the name of Gaspar Goricio, who assisted to complete it. This Columbus presented to the sovereigns, accompanied by his enthusiastic letter already mentioned, early in the following year. In February, also, he wrote a letter to Pope Alexander VII. In this letter he apologizes, on account of indispensable occupations, for not having repaired to Rome, according to his original inten-

tion, to give an account of his grand discoveries. After briefly relating them, he adds that his enterprizes had been undertaken with intent of dedicating the gains to the recovery of the holy sepulchre. He mentions the vow which he had expressed in a letter to the Spanish sovereigns, to furnish, within seven years, fifty thousand foot and five thousand horse for the purpose, and another like force within five succeeding years. This pious intention, he laments, had been impeded by the arts of the devil, and he feared, without divine aid, would be entirely frustrated, as the government granted him in perpetuity had been taken from him. He informs his holiness of his being about to embark on another voyage, and promises solemnly on his return, to repair to Rome without delay, to relate every thing by word of mouth, as well as to present him with an account of his voyages, which he has kept from the commencement to the present time, in the style of the commentaries of Cæsar\*.

It was about this time, also, that he sent his letter on the subject of the sepulchre to the sovereigns, together with the collection of prophecies. We have no account of the manner in which the proposition was received. Ferdinand, with all his bigotry, was a shrewd and worldly prince. Instead of a romantic crusade against Jerusalem, he preferred making a pacific arrangement with the grand soldan of Egypt, who had menaced the destruction of the sacred edifice. He dispatched, therefore, about this time, the learned Peter Martyr, of Angloria, so distinguished for his historical writings, as ambassador to the soldan, by whom all ancient grievances between the two powers were satisfactorily adjusted, and arrangements made for the conservation of the

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\* Navarrete, Collec. Viag. T. 2, Doc. 145.

holy sepulchre, and the comfort of all Christian pilgrims resorting to it.

In the meantime Columbus went on with the preparations for his contemplated voyage: though he was able to proceed but slowly, owing, as Charlevoix intimates, to the artifices and delays of Fonseca, and his agents. He craved permission to touch at the island of Hispaniola, on his outward voyage, for supplies, necessary in so long an expedition. This, however, the sovereigns forbade. They knew that he had many enemies in the island, and that the place would be in great agitation from the arrival of Ovando, and the removal of Bobadilla. They consented, however, that he should touch for a short time there on his return, by which time they hoped the island would be restored to tranquillity. Columbus was permitted to take with him in this expedition his brother, the adelantado, and his son Fernando, then in his fourteenth year. He was also permitted to take two or three persons, learned in Arabic, to serve as interpreters, in case he should arrive at the dominions of the Grand Khan, or of any other eastern prince, where that language might be spoken, or partially known. In reply to letters relative to the ultimate restoration of his rights, and to matters concerning his family, the sovereigns wrote him a letter, dated March 14, 1502, from Valencia de Torre, in which they again solemnly assured him that their capitulations with him should be fulfilled to the letter, and the dignities therein ceded should be enjoyed by him and his children after him. And if it should be necessary to confirm them anew, they would do so, and secure them to his son. Beside which they expressed their disposition to bestow further honours and rewards upon himself, his brothers, and his children. They entreated him, therefore, to depart in peace and confi-

dence, and to leave all his concerns in Spain to the management of his son Diego\*.

This was the last letter that Columbus received from the sovereigns, and the assurances it contained were as ample and absolute as he could desire. Recent circumstances, however, had apparently rendered him dubious of the future. During the time that he passed in Seville, previous to his departure, he took measures to secure his fame, and preserve the claims of his family, by placing them under the guardianship of his native country. He had copies of all the letters, grants, and privileges from the sovereigns, appointing him admiral, viceroy, and governor of the Indias, copied and authenticated before the *alcaldes* of Seville. Two sets of these were drawn out, together with his letter to the nurse of Prince Juan, containing a circumstantial and eloquent vindication of his rights, and two letters to the bank of St. George, at Genoa, assigning to it the tenth of his revenues, to be employed in diminishing the duties on corn and other provisions, a truly benevolent and patriotic donation, intended for the relief of the poor of his native city. These two sets of documents he sent by different individuals to his friend doctor Nicolo Odorigo, formerly ambassador from Genoa to the court of Spain, requesting him to preserve them in some safe deposit, and to apprise his son Diego of the same. His dissatisfaction at the conduct of the Spanish court may have been the cause of this precautionary measure, that an appeal to the world, or to posterity, might be in the power of his descendants, in case he should perish in the course of his voyage†.

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\* Las Casas, Hist. Ind. L. 2, C. 4.

† These documents lay unknown in the Odorigo family until 1679, when Lorenzo Odorigo presented them to the government of

Genoa, and they were deposited in the archives. In the disturbances and revolutions of after times, one of these copies was taken to Paris, and the other disappeared. In 1816, the latter was discovered in the library of the deceased count Michel Angelo Cambiaso, a senator of Genoa. It was procured by the king of Sardinia, then sovereign of Genoa, and was given up to the city of Genoa by him in 1821. A custodia, or monument, was erected in that city for its conservation, consisting of a marble column, supporting an urn, surmounted by a bust of Columbus. The documents were deposited in the urn. These papers have been published, together with a historical memoir of Columbus, by D. Gio. Battista Spotorno, professor of eloquence, &c., in the university of Genoa.

END OF VOL. II.



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*Du. 123.*

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